

"APPLICATION OF A GESTALT THEORY AS AN  
INTEGRATIVE FACTOR IN MODERN LITERARY  
CRITICISM"

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Thesis

APPLICATION OF A GESTALT THEORY AS AN INTEGRATIVE FACTOR  
IN MODERN LITERARY CRITICISM

by

Saul N. Wernick

(B.S. in J., Boston University, 1948)

submitted in partial fulfillment of the  
requirements for the degree of

Master of Arts

1948





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## INTRODUCTION

Statement of the problem. It is the purpose of this thesis to set up a frame of critical reference which uses the theory of gestalt as a unifying and integrative factor in modern literary criticism. Hitherto, examinations of a work of art have been concerned with less than a totality of the work of art as an organic experience. Since the Modern Climate of Opinion considers a work of art as an experiential process, not only the object of art, but the artist and the appreciator are vital and primary interacting elements that make up the totality of a work of art, and in whose interaction may be found the organic wholeness of the process. Gestalt criticism is focused on the total organic pattern.

John Steinbeck has been taken as a subject for practical criticism using the principles of Gestalt criticism. As a result of this inquiry it will be seen that previous critical techniques have failed in adequately performing the function of literary criticism. Gestalt criticism is an attempt to apply a critical basis which allows for a deeper and more penetrating insight and understanding of a work of art.

As in the case of any theory, the broad statements made here are open to critical examination, and to change, if necessary. whatever validity this theory of gestalt



criticism may have is dependent only on the degree to which it better enables the critical function to operate.

Importance of the study. Works of art are emergent from a particular philosophic perspective; so, too, following the works of art, criteria by which these works of art are evaluated should also emerge from the same philosophy. A work of art is most validly evaluated by critical standards which are emergent out of the same philosophy as that held by the creator of that work of art, or by standards emergent out of a later philosophic perspective which has progressed intellectually and humanly beyond this original philosophy. Thus, while traditional art may be judged by traditional criteria, it may also be evaluated validly by critical standards emergent out of the Modern Climate of Opinion.

The converse is not true. Art created by a responsible artist, consciously or unconsciously in the Modern Climate of Opinion, cannot with any validity be criticized (in the full sense of the word) by traditional critical standards. These assumptions will be dealt with at a later point.

Contemporaneity does not denote modernity. A present day artist may hold to any of the traditional philosophic perspectives, as do T. S. Eliot or Robert Lowell, to mention only two. This is cause for neither blame nor praise. It is only of importance to the critical reader in determining the focus of the artist, and how well he succeeds in achieving







his artistic aim; the artistic perspective of the artist being based upon his philosophic perspective.

While John Steinbeck has been used as an author whose works are evaluated here by means of these modern critical methods, it is important to note that these criteria and this process of criticism may be--in fact, should be--used in general in modern criticism.

Function of the critic. The function of literary criticism is more than just the evaluation of literary material. As literature of any consequence or significance is indicative of the intellectual and human values achieved by contemporary civilization, so literary criticism must have as its function the evaluation of this civilization. Literary criticism is concerned with humanity in its most vital aspect. It attains whatever importance it may have, measured on a scale of human values, when its potentialities as a particular form of communication are realized and put to use. It is only when criticism is used as a means of interpreting art in its relationship to life, pointing out the direction of progression of our culture, which the artist, in his sensitive intellectuality, has realized and portrayed in whatever media he uses, that it utilizes to the fullest these potentialities. A concern for this is necessary in every serious, conscientious critic no matter what his personal philosophic perspective may be.

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The critic worthy of the name must be as sensitive as the artist. In the case of the one, it is a creative sensitivity which is an integral part of the total pattern of the work-of-art process; in that of the second, it is a sensitivity not only to the artist, the work-of-art process, and the esthetic experience, but, also, to the meaning and import of what the artist has achieved. Always there must be borne in mind the fact that the validity of criticism is dependent upon the critic's concern for the significance of life. This, of course, is a matter of philosophy, but, as it has been mentioned before, criticism is emergent from philosophy; that criticism which is not is only criticism of technique.



Acknowledgement. I would like to express my indebtedness to Professor Edward A. Post, of the faculty of the Graduate School, for the fulfillment of the many demands I have made upon his time, energy and patience, in excess of that usually required for a work of this sort, over a period of several years, and for allowing me to share in that deep insight which is his.





## CHAPTER ONE

### SOME ELEMENTS OF THE MODERN CLIMATE OF OPINION

Definition of the term. The Modern Climate of Opinion--a phrase originated by Alfred North Whitehead--is a framework of modern philosophies whose main focus is on scientific humanism.<sup>1</sup> Some of its elements will be reviewed here briefly since the philosophy of John Steinbeck falls within the Modern Climate of Opinion. The Modern Climate of Opinion is an important determinant of meaning, and, as such, is considered as a frame of reference.

The term, Modern Climate of Opinion, refers to the intellectual Zeitgeist in which these philosophies exist. One either adjusts to this philosophic area or one does not. It is a pattern of thinking existing at this present time. Out of it has emerged a new conception of man in relation to other men; out of it have emerged non-Euclidean mathematics and non-teleological thinking, and a theory of art as a process that bases its validity upon experience.

Civilization and culture. These terms, as understood

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<sup>1</sup>cf. Julian Huxley, "Creed of a Scientific Humanist," Present Tense, Sharon Brown, editor, (revised edition; New York: Harcourt, Brace and Company, 1945), pp. 657-663.

# THE HISTORY

OF THE

REIGN OF

CHARLES THE FIRST

BY

JOHN BURNET

OF THE UNIVERSITY OF OXFORD

IN TWO VOLUMES

LONDON

Printed by J. Streater, at the Sign of the Gun, in St. Dunstons Church-yard, 1679.

THE SECOND VOLUME

CONTAINING

THE HISTORY OF THE

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THE SECOND VOLUME

CONTAINING

by the Modern Climate of Opinion are not synonymous. "Civilization is measured by the amount of intelligence used in the processes of preserving or formulating patterns of living."<sup>2</sup> "Culture is the meaning of civilization. Whatever it is that communicates or explains civilization is culture."<sup>3</sup>

As the developing growth of an individual from embryo to maturity is the result of interaction of organism with surroundings, so culture is the product not of efforts men put forth in a void or just upon themselves, but of prolonged and cumulative interaction with environment.<sup>4</sup>

Some elements of the Modern Climate of Opinion. Meaning, not logic, is the important determinant in thought. One of the major tenets of this philosophy is that one must turn away from logic as the main determinant in meaning, turning, instead, to Zeitgeist--environmental, cultural and intellectual--for clarification. A conception such as this is based on an ecological concept of man as an organism influenced and interacting with his environment. But this conception is tempered by a concern for the meaning, significance and value of experience. Philosophy, science, art, must turn to experience for a base of values, and whatever validity they attain is thus measured on an experiential scale.

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<sup>2</sup> Prof. Edward A. Post, Boston University, in a lecture, 1946.

<sup>3</sup> Loc. cit.

<sup>4</sup> John Dewey, Art As Experience, (New York: Minton, Balch and Co., 1934), p. 28.





Ultimately, there are but two philosophies. One of them accepts life and experience in all its uncertainty, mystery, doubt, and half-knowledge and turns that experience upon itself to deepen and intensify its own qualities...<sup>5</sup>

The greatest accent is upon man; the importance of the individual is not sacrificed for an abstract ideal. Man is the starting point from which this philosophy begins. The world of an individual is bounded only by the extent of his senses and of his intellectual faculty. "...only when an organism shares in the ordered relations of its environment does it secure the stability essential to living."<sup>6</sup> It is an emphasis on the scientific attitude of modern thinking, as opposed to the traditional humanistic thinking.

Science has extended man's knowledge, and one in the Modern Climate of Opinion takes advantage of this broadening base by an increasing investigation of actualities. This emphasis on science as an aid to living<sup>7</sup> is, in its way, cause for one of the major differences between the Modern Climate of Opinion and traditional philosophy. Classical thinkers had no scientific aid; they depended upon the world of discourse. They turned to logic-as-proof rather than to empirical proof.

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<sup>5</sup> Ibid., p. 34.

<sup>6</sup> Ibid., p. 15.

<sup>7</sup> Ibid., p. 26.



The aim of science, as considered by the Modern Climate of Opinion, is to determine the relationship of things and not to define them:

The distinguishing contribution of man is consciousness of the relations found in nature. Through consciousness, he converts the relations of cause and effect that are found in nature into relations of means and consequence.<sup>8</sup>

Man has three tools to understand life: science, philosophy and art. Science is to attain knowledge of life; philosophy is to attain a realization of the meaning of life; and, art is to realize the values of life.

There are no finalities in science; it has the endless requirement of new problems. But since the Modern Climate of Opinion holds that there are no fixed certainties conclusions, too, can never be final. They must change when the data relating to them changes.<sup>9</sup> Traditional philosophies were not aware of time and space as dimensions belonging to an object, and sought, rather, for eternal abstractions forever true. Nothing is unrelated to time and space, according to the Modern Climate of Opinion, but traditional philosophy is concerned with concepts that do not take into account the continua of time and space.

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<sup>8</sup> Ibid., pp. 24-25

<sup>9</sup> cf. John Dewey, The Quest For Certainty, (New York: Minton, Balch and Co., 1929).

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The essential quality (in a non-ontological sense) of the Modern Climate of Opinion is a factual rather than rational consideration of all things. The important question is not what a thing is but what it can do.

Holding that the world is in a continuous state of flux and that all things are in recurrent modes of fashion (that is, everything is in a process of decay and reorganization), there are thus no absolutes--whether of values or of ideas--in the Modern Climate of Opinion. Relationships are the most accurate means of determining a value, significance or meaning. "The truth of things as well as the things themselves are changing entities."<sup>10</sup>

Life is developmental; history is a determinant of the present, for everything is a history. "Life is a process of becoming."<sup>11</sup>

Life itself consists of phases in which the organism falls out of step with the march of surrounding things and then recovers unison with it--either through effort or by some happy chance. And, in a growing life, the recovery is never mere return to a prior state, for it is enriched by the state of disparity and resistance through which it has successfully passed...Life grows when a temporary falling out is a transition to a more extensive balance of the energies of the organism with those of the conditions under which it lives.<sup>12</sup>

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<sup>10</sup> Carl Becker, quoted by Prof. Post, in a lecture, 1946.

<sup>11</sup> Professor Post, in a lecture, 1946.

<sup>12</sup> Dewey, Art As Experience, p. 14.





It is this consideration of man's antecedent continuum, and its influence upon the individual, as well as upon civilization and culture that is derived from scientific investigation. As George Boas writes, "We read a book or hear a piece of music through our whole past."<sup>13</sup>

There is a cumulative interaction between man's intellect and nature in the Emersonian sense. Man's intelligence consists in harmonizing himself with nature of which he is a part.<sup>14</sup> This is in opposition to traditional philosophy which holds that man and nature are inimical.

The Modern Climate of Opinion and democracy. The Modern Climate of Opinion is a recognition of the rights of the individual, of respect for the individual. Man has the right, it maintains, to achieve whatever excellence he is capable of attaining. This is not equalitarianism; it is only the equality of opportunity for each individual to develop his potentialities. Each individual--who is, himself, a unique pattern of development has the right to

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<sup>13</sup> A Primer For Critics, (Baltimore: The Johns Hopkins Press, 1937), p. 36.

<sup>14</sup> cf. John Dewey, Experience and Nature, (revised edition; New York: The Open Court Publishing Co., 1929), Chaps. One and Nine,



enlarge his own ideas, thoughts and judgements.<sup>15</sup> This is freedom of individuation, the progression as an individual in a progressing civilization and culture.

Each individual has freedom of inquiry. This alone may be termed a declaration of intellectual independence. It is a denial of authoritarianism, holding that no field of thought is sacrosanct, nothing is above investigation--especially things intellectual.<sup>16</sup> The individual thus has a duty not to accept what is offered him until he has investigated and determined for himself its degree of validity.

But the freedoms to which an individual is entitled entail corresponding duties: one must contribute to the culture of which he is a part; for it is by these cumulative contributions that civilization and culture progress.

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<sup>15</sup> cf. John Dewey, "Democracy and Educational Administration," School and Society, April 3, 1937. (Reprinted in Intelligence in the Modern World, Joseph Ratner, ed., (New York: The Modern Library, 1939), pp. 400-04.

<sup>16</sup> cf. Ralph Waldo Emerson, "The American Scholar," Ralph Waldo Emerson, Frederick I. Carpenter, ed., (New York: The American Book Co., 1934), p. 55: "Meek young men grow up in libraries, believing it their duty to accept the views which Cicero, which Locke, which Bacon have given; forgetful that Cicero, Locke, and Bacon were only young men in libraries when they wrote these books."





## CHAPTER TWO

### THE WORK-OF-ART TOTALITY

Definition of the term. The conception of a work of art held by those thinkers who are in the Modern Climate of Opinion is not that of traditional philosophy. It is no longer a noun descriptive of a single object in time and space which can be perceived, sensed, heard or felt. This is too narrow a conception. It limits itself only to that which is better labelled as an "object of art," whose function is only one of the elements that make up the total pattern of the work-of-art. The work-of-art is a verb; it is a process of undergoing, perceiving, understanding, realizing. Works of art are "...the refined and intensified forms of experience."<sup>1</sup>

It is in the definitions of the term "work of art" constructed by those in the Modern Climate of Opinion that one realizes the changed conception; a change that regards a work of art as a unity whose total is greater than the sum of its parts. The focus is now upon art as a process rather than art as an object. "Art is the creation of

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<sup>1</sup> John Dewey, Art As Experience, (New York: Minton, Balch and Co., 1934), p. 3.





value." "Art is a way of thinking."<sup>2</sup>

Many theories about art already exist. If there is justification for proposing yet another philosophy of the esthetic, it must be found in a new mode of approach. Combinations and permutations among existing theories can easily be brought forth by those so inclined. But... the trouble with existing theories is that they start from ready-made compartmentalization, or from a conception of art that "spiritualizes" it out of connection with the objects of concrete experience. The alternative, however, to such spiritualization is not a degrading and philistine materialization of works of fine art, but a conception that discloses the way in which these works idealize qualities found in common experience. Were works of art placed in a directly human context in popular esteem, they would have a much wider appeal than they can when pigeon-hole theories of art win general acceptance.

A conception of fine art that sets out from its connection with discovered qualities of ordinary experience will be able to indicate the factors and forces that favor the normal development of common human activities into matters of artistic value. It will also be able to point out those conditions that arrest its normal growth. Writers on esthetic theory often raise the question of whether esthetic philosophy can aid in cultivation of esthetic appreciation. The question is a branch of the general theory of criticism, which, it seems to me, fails to accomplish its full office if it does not indicate what to look for and what to find in concrete esthetic objects. But, in any case, it is safe to say that a philosophy of art is sterilized unless it makes us aware of the function of art in relation to other modes of experience, and unless it indicates why this function is so inadequately realized, and unless it suggests the conditions<sup>3</sup> under which the office would be successfully performed.

It is this very conception that art has a function, and that its function is one of relationship to life and to

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<sup>2</sup> Prof. Edward A. Post, in a lecture, 1946, Boston University.

<sup>3</sup> Dewey, op. cit., pp. 11-12.



human experience, that is conditioned by the philosophy of the Modern Climate of Opinion. Art must, in a philosophy such as this, in order to be termed "art," "be useful in the ultimate degree--that of contributing directly and liberally to an expanding and enriched life."<sup>4</sup> Thus, another function is added to art: that of contributing to human experience. All of these terms are connotative of action, of a positive force.

A work-of-art totality may be broken down into three major divisions, each of which is composed of the interaction of its several parts, and each of which interacts with the other two divisions to form the complete totality. It is in this interaction that a work of is, of necessity, a process. These major divisions are: 1) the artist, 2) the object of art, and 3) the appreciator. In their triadic relationship lies the work-of-art totality. These divisions will be discussed at greater length in the following pages.

The work of art process is that in which the artist is stirred by an esthetic, sensitive realization of the meaningfulness of a significant experience which he expresses representatively through the medium in which he works, so that it points up the sensed pattern of values to stimulate

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<sup>4</sup> Ibid., p. 27.

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the appreciator to an active participation in which the appreciator recreates for himself the original, psychological and intellectual esthetic experience. In the repetition of this process it becomes an enrichment of life. Yet this process is not merely repetitive. It is additive; it is the antecedent continuum of the appreciator's experience which conditions him to a receptivity of the artistic<sup>5</sup> experience in varying degrees of realization and of which continuum it becomes a part in a cumulative process.

The artistic perspective of one in the Modern Climate of Opinion is based on an integration of values that become harmonic with a developmental, changing base of values, which form an achieved pattern. This is his philosophic perspective. The meaning of life and experience is created through harmonic insight. Art, therefore, becomes a contribution to meaning. Art adds to the experiential values which cumulatively form this developmental base. Art is thus a process of intensifying and enriching life; it is itself a significant phase of life, and a contribu-

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<sup>5</sup> Dewey, op. cit., pp. 46-47, states that: "We have no word in the English language that unambiguously includes what is signified by the two words 'artistic' and 'esthetic.' Since 'artistic' refers to the act of production and 'esthetic' to that of perception and enjoyment, the absence of a term designating the two processes taken together is unfortunate." I have therefore taken the liberty of creating such a work. Its exact definition lies in the above statement.





tion to the meaningfulness of life.

There are a multiplicity of elements in experience by which one forms a pattern of life through frames of reference. Art creates constellated patterns of related experience, of relative and varying significance. The function of a work of art, then, is to point up these discovered elements of meaning.

A work of art is to be considered, in this thesis, as meaning a process, since it is so thought of in the Modern Climate of Opinion. It is a participative experience, with an emphasis on sharing by the appreciator.<sup>6</sup>

By artistic is meant: "The doing or making of an object of art is artistic when the perceived result is of such nature that its qualities as perceived have controlled the question of production."<sup>7</sup> Dewey further adds: "To be truly artistic, a work must also be esthetic--that is, framed for enjoyed receptive perception."<sup>8</sup>

Art as a Process: The artist. The function of an artist in a civilization is to communicate its culture, for art indicates the direction of our patterns of life. An

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<sup>6</sup> cf. Emerson: "It is the good reader who maketh the good book."

<sup>7</sup> Dewey, op. cit., p. 48. Italics in original.

<sup>8</sup> Loc. cit.



artist, more sensitive to experience than the non-artist,<sup>9</sup> sees more deeply into the meaning of the primary experience<sup>10</sup> and clarifies this experience by clarifying its relationship to a constellation of already realized experiences of which it becomes a part. It is this ability to correlate the phases of human experience into a meaningful whole whose values are dependent upon the validity of its meaningfulness as a unity that determines the extent of this creative insight which is a necessary integral element in the make-up of the artist. Any work of artistic merit is thus based largely upon the extent of the artist's antecedent continuum, and especially, his sensitivity to primary experience. It

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<sup>9</sup> The instinct or urge which causes the artist, as differentiated from the non-artist, to create an expressive object of art will be discussed later.

<sup>10</sup> The multi-meanings of the term "experience" necessitate a differentiation between experience as an occurrence (circumstance), circumstance with meaning (the primary experience), the artistic experience (realization by the artist of the meaningfulness of the primary experience and its expression through the creation of an object of art), the appreciator experience (realization of the values and meanings communicated by the object of art which produce the stimuli necessary for the appreciator's recreation of the significant primary experience), the esthetic experience (simultaneous perception and enjoyment upon several levels, dependent upon the sensitivity of the appreciator), and the work-of-art experience (the total experience involved in participating in a work-of-art process). As a matter of fact, the entire field of esthetic language stands in need of semantic and psychological clarification.





is this sensitivity that the stimulus of the primary experience affects. "Art must be related to vital life, because it is only the serious impingement of life upon an artist that can produce deep and powerful emotions."<sup>11</sup>

Technical facility is not enough in the artist, no matter what medium he uses. The function of technique and facility (skill) lies only in the activity of the artist in fashioning the object of art so that its technical excellence serves to better the function of the object of art as a method of communication. "An incredible amount of observation and of the kind of intelligence that is exercised in perception of qualitative relations characterize creative work in art."<sup>12</sup>

The artist begins his creative activity the moment that the meaningfulness of the primary experience becomes apparent to him. This creative activity is always, at first, purely intellectual. It may, as Graham Wallas claims, even start as a psychological activity below the threshold

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<sup>11</sup> Prof. Edward A. Post, in a comment upon R. G. Collingwood's statement: "...an artist who is not furnished, independently of being an artist, with deep and powerful emotions will never produce anything except shallow and frivolous works of art." (The Principles of Art, London, 1938), p. 279.

<sup>12</sup> Dewey, op. cit., pp. 50-51.



of consciousness in the progression of experiencing, gestating, realizing and reflecting.<sup>13</sup> Collingwood, who apparently disagrees with Wallas by stating, "The activity which generates an artistic experience is the activity of consciousness,"<sup>14</sup> later amplifies his statement: "Wherever there is an idea, or imaginative experience, there are also the following elements: (1) an impression, or sensuous experience, corresponding with it; (2) an act of consciousness converting that impression into an idea."<sup>15</sup> Wallas' inquiry into the psychological process concerns itself with the elements of "converting" the idea, and there is, in reality, no disagreement between them. That an imaginative activity or idea can be an experience per se is not a new concept for all the essential elements that qualify an experience as such are present in an idea, if the idea is meaningful and significant.

With the experience acting as a stimulus, the artist is moved to create. In the case of the sensitive non-artist, there is no urge to create, but he himself becomes the entire field in which the work-of-art totality operates.

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<sup>13</sup> The Art of Thought, (New York: Harcourt, Brace & Co., 1926).

<sup>14</sup> Op. cit., p. 273.

<sup>15</sup> Ibid., p. 306.



The work of art...is not a bodily or perceptible thing, but an activity of the artist; and not an activity of his "body" or sensuous nature, but an activity of his consciousness...

It seems to be a normal part of the artist's work that he should communicate his experience to other people. In order to do that, he must have some means of communicating with them; and these means are something bodily and perceptible...<sup>16</sup>

The work of art and the object of art are not the same thing, as Collingwood points out:

A work of art...is not an artifact...but a total imaginative experience [and] its production is somehow necessarily connected with the aesthetic activity, that is, with the creation of the imaginative experience which is the work of art.<sup>17</sup>

This urge to express--the creative urge, its stimulation, the area which ~~the~~ the stimuli irritate to action and the degree in which this area exists in an individual--is a matter for psychological investigation.<sup>18</sup> With the individual, sensitive non-artist the need for an expressive object of art disappears, since its function as a communicant is unnecessary for realization of the values in the experience.

Thus, in the work-of-art process:

For the artist, the inward experience may be external-

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<sup>16</sup> Collingwood, op. cit., p. 300.

<sup>17</sup> Ibid., p. 305.

<sup>18</sup> An attempt to answer this problem has been made by Joseph Rossman. Cf. The Psychology of the Inventor, (Washington: The Inventor's Publishing Co., 1931.)





ized or converted into a perceptible object; though there is no intrinsic reason why it should be. (b) For the audience, there is a converse process; the outward experience comes first, and this is converted into that inward experience which alone is aesthetic.<sup>19</sup>

Experience is the subject matter for art and is the area in which the artist finds material for his creating. But it is not enough for the artist merely to recount the occurrences or events of life. It is in their relationship with human values that they become meaningful and significant. The artist must therefore pick and choose, relating the elements of the experience so as to heighten their values and to present the significance of this relationship to his audience.

Dewey points out that the effect of subject matter upon the artist is not passive, but active and volatile:

Speaking of the production of poetry, Samuel Alexander remarked "that the artist's work proceeds not from a finished imaginative experience to which the work of art corresponds, but from passionate excitement about the subject matter...The poet's poem is wrung from him by the subject which excites him." The passage is a text upon which we may hang four comments. One of these comments may pass for the present as a reenforcement of a point made in previous chapters. The real work of art is the building up of an integral experience out of the interaction of organic and environmental conditions and energies. Nearer to our present theme is the second point: the thing expressed is wrung from the producer by the pressure exercised by objective things upon the direct and immaculate issue of the latter. The third point follows. The act of expression that constitutes a work of art is a construction in time, not an instant-

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<sup>19</sup> Collingwood, op. cit., pp. 301-02.



aneous emission. And this statement signifies a great deal more than that it takes time for the painter to transfer his imaginative conception to canvas and for the sculptor to complete his chipping of marble. It means that the expression of the self in and through a medium, constituting the work of art, is itself a prolonged interaction of something issuing from the self with objective conditions, a process in which both of them acquire form and order they did not at first possess...

The final comment is that when excitement about subject matter goes deep, it stirs up a store of attitudes and meanings derived from prior experience. As they are aroused into activity they become conscious thoughts and emotions, emotionalized images. To be set on fire by a thought or scene is to be inspired. What is kindled must either burn itself out, turning to ashes, or must press itself out in material that changes from crude metal into a refined product...

Materials undergoing combustion because of intimate contacts and mutually exercised resistances constitute inspiration. On the side of the self, elements that issue from prior experience are stirred into action in fresh desires, impulses and images. These proceed from the subconscious, not cold, or in shapes that are identified with particulars of the past, not in chunks and lumps, but fused in the fire of internal combustion. They do not seem to come from the self, because they issue from a self not consciously known...Inflamed inner material must find objective fuel upon which to feed. Through the interaction of the fuel with material already afire the refined and formed product comes into existence. The act of expression is not something which supervenes upon an inspiration already complete. It is the carrying forward to completion of an inspiration by means of the objective material of perception and imagery.<sup>20</sup>

Continually, while forming his object of art, the artist is concerned with reflection, with "shaping and re-shaping."

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<sup>20</sup> Op. cit., pp. 64-66.

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The process of art in production is related to the esthetic in perception organically...Until the artist is satisfied in perception with what he is doing, he continues shaping and reshaping. The making comes to an end when its result is experienced as good--and that experience comes not by mere intellectual and outside judgement but in direct perception. An artist, in comparison with his fellows, is one who is not only especially gifted in powers of execution but in unusual sensitivity to the qualities of things. This sensitivity also directs his doings and makings.<sup>21</sup>

Art is thus organic in form from the very moment the artist becomes aware of the signification of an experience, since this "shaping and reshaping" takes place in the preparatory, gestative mental process that lies below the threshold of conscious thought. It continues through the "making" of the object of art; through to the completion of the work-of-art process in the experience of the appreciator.

The individuality of the artist is not expressed in "style." Since it is inextricably a factor in influencing his cogitative process it places its impress upon every element in the object of art. Because the individuality of the artist is partly a resultant of his physical, psychological and cultural environment any evaluative consider-

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<sup>21</sup> Ibid, p. 49; cf. Collingwood, op. cit., p. 281: "The watching of his own work with a vigilant...eye...is not a critical activity subsequent to...the artistic work... it is an integral part of that work..."



ation of a work of art that does not inquire into the philosophic perspective, the artistic perspective, and the cultural and environmental Zeitgeist of the artist is not complete. Technical facility, craftsmanship, skill, are only tools the artist uses, not an integral nor determining part of the value of a work of art.

A creative artist [Graham Wallas stresses] often reaches maturity only when he has learnt so to use his conscious craftsmanship in the expression of his thought as not to silence the promptings of that imperfectly coordinated whole which is his personality.<sup>22</sup>

The function of the artist in the work-of-art process is interpretation. He creates a work of art (object of art) which is "...a distinctive type of interpretation of man's experience and of the real world to which this experience is oriented."<sup>23</sup> This emphasis upon interpretation as one of the elements of the artist's function becomes important in the light of what has already been said. For, unless the object of art is presented symbolically (that is, has symbolic form) what is offered to the appreciator is no more than a copy of the experiential reality--no more than

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<sup>22</sup> Op. cit., p. 107.

<sup>23</sup> Thomas Meyer Greene, The Arts and the Art of Criticism, (Princeton: The Princeton University Press, 1940) p. 230.



veritism. Naturalism and realism as schools of artistic thought do not progress beyond this veritism. This is not to say that a naturalistic or realistic (of the Henry James type of realism) focus has no importance. As a developmental link in the historical progression of art to experiential realism (which is concerned at great length with interpretative symbolism) these schools have an important place.

The artist is, primarily, a human being. Biologically, he is of the species of Man (homo sapiens); psychologically, he is an individual man; intellectually, he is "Man Thinking."<sup>24</sup> The artist is conditioned by the reflexes, instincts, impulses and drives that are a condition of the very process of living. As man, an intelligent, rational and ratiocinative creature, he applies the capabilities of a mind that operates in reflection upon the perceptions resultant from the stimuli produced by his interaction as a being with other men, with society and with nature. As a participant in life, the artist is more than just an onlooker, although it is not necessary that he engage physically in every

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<sup>24</sup> Ralph Waldo Emerson, "The American Scholar," Ralph Waldo Emerson, Frederick I. Carpenter, editor, (New York: American Book Co., 1934), p. 52.





experience he uses as subject matter for creating a work of art.<sup>25</sup> The causal relationship of life upon an artist is what stimulates him to a reaction, the product of which is an object of art. The psychological means by which this is achieved is: stimulus, motor response, mental perception to the motor response, reflection (the degree of which is influenced by his sensitivity), the creative urge, the technical ability (skill) to bring this urge to completion, and the process of "making" which is both psychological and physical activity.<sup>26</sup>

All of these elements are necessary. The interpretation is conditioned by the artist's individuality and his individual response as well as by his species response. The degree of artistic interpretation is determined by the degree to which the artist symbolically heightens the values of the significant experience.

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<sup>25</sup> cf. ante, an idea can be an experience.

<sup>26</sup> According to the Behaviorists, only a simple S-R bond is activated; from the Gestalt and functionalist point of view, it is an S-O-R bond with the organism contributing to the response. I have taken the liberty of using the term "motor response" to include all perceptual awareness as well as neural activity in response to a stimulus. Under "stimulus" I include mental, or ideational, stimuli (internal) in addition to physical (external) stimuli, although I am aware that this view does not meet with complete approval from several schools of psychological thought.

Cf. also, Graham Wallas, op. cit., Chap. IV.



Art as a Process: The object of art. In the triadic relationship of artist, object of art and appreciator, the object of art is the communicant through which the artistic experience is presented to the appreciator for re-creation, and re-experiencing.<sup>27</sup> As such it is a language; in the case of sculpture, painting, architecture, music and the dance, it is non-verbal, in that of literature it is verbal. In any of the arts, the symbols of the object of art must be recognized and understood by the appreciator, not only as symbols carrying a meaning,<sup>28</sup> but in the light of his conditioning to "art" by the culture in which he lives. Thus, an Oriental is conditioned to "seeing" perspective in a painting differently than does an Occidental; his poetry does not correspond exactly to ours, nor does his music, the latter especially, since it is based on an entirely different scale. In the case of

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<sup>27</sup> Cf. Dewey, op. cit., p. 162 and p. 214.

<sup>28</sup> Cf. Susanne K. Langer, The Practice of Meaning, (New York: Henry Holt and Company, 1930), Chap. V; S. I. Hayakawa, Language in Action, (New York: Harcourt, Brace and Company, 1946), Chap. 2; C. K. Ogden and I. A. Richards, The Meaning of Meaning, (New York: Harcourt, Brace and Company, 1930), for sixteen definitions or usages of the term "Meaning"; and, I. A. Richards, Practical Criticism, (New York: Harcourt, Brace and Company, revised, 1930), Part Three, Chap. I.

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Chinese literature, for example, not only would a Westerner have to recognize the symbols which the characters represent, but also the physical objects of which the symbols are indices. This problem exists in understanding our own literature. But since we are already conditioned to automatic, reflexive understanding of the objects the words formed by the letters of the alphabet symbolize, we rarely consider these elementary processes.<sup>29</sup>

In literature it is not the printed page that constitutes the object of art, as in painting it is not the canvas and oil. The printed page is that which is perceptual, and which, when its symbols, as Langer suggests, are recognized and understood, becomes the stimulus for the appreciator reaction. An object of art, in this case the novel, "...has a unique quality, but it is that of clarifying and concentrating meaning contained in the material of other experiences."<sup>30</sup>

It is not enough that the object of art arouses a response in the appreciator. It should, as Dewey claims, awaken "in other persons [the appreciators] new perceptions of the meanings of the common world."<sup>31</sup>

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<sup>29</sup> Cf. Langer, op. cit., pp. 109ff.

<sup>30</sup> Dewey, op. cit., p. 84.

<sup>31</sup> Ibid., p. 82.

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Since the object of art is a distillation by the artist of material in his own experience it is selective and personal. Those in the naturalist school will disagree that art is selective, for naturalism (or veritism) openly decries selectivity by the artist as being contrary to life. If it is agreed, however, that the validity of an object of art is dependent upon its presentation of the values and significant elements of experiences, then art must be selective, for interspersed with these meaningful events are the non-significant (though not insignificant) and the meaningless. The use of these latter elements in the novel should be to heighten by contrast the meaningful and significant experiences.

The artist, as creator, is responsible for the selection of experiential elements that are included in his object of art. As such, Dewey points out, "...the directive source of selection is interest; and unconscious but organic bias toward certain aspects and values of the complex and variegated universe in which we live."<sup>32</sup> Since this point has been mentioned--the "unconscious but organic bias"--it is important to note that the previously mentioned "threshold of conscious thought" be considered not as a

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<sup>32</sup> Ibid., p. 95.



line of sharp demarcation but as "an area of co-consciousness in which subconscious and conscious thought are both simultaneously operative."<sup>33</sup> It is a grey-scale rather than a black-white opposition.

The object of art is thus to be considered not as an object per se but "...what the product does with and in experience..."<sup>34</sup> In the interaction of the related parts of the object of art it achieves its unity. These related parts, in the novel, should be organic in form, emerging out of the material used and the manner of presentation, the latter being adapted to the needs of the former.

The important thing [emphasized Dewey] is that a work of art exploit its medium to the uttermost--bearing in mind that material is not medium save when used as an organ of expression. The materials of nature and human association are multifarious to the point of infinity. Whenever any material finds a medium that expresses its value in experience--that is, its imaginative and emotional value--it becomes the substance of a work of art. The abiding struggle of art is thus to convert materials that are stammering or dumb in ordinary experience into eloquent media. Remembering that art itself denotes a quality of action and of things done, every authentic new work of art is in some degree itself the birth of a new art.<sup>35</sup>

Characterization, dialogue, narration, plot, stream

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<sup>33</sup> Ibid., p. 95.

<sup>34</sup> Dewey, op. cit., p. 3.

<sup>35</sup> Ibid., pp. 228-29, italics in original.





of consciousness, description, style, etc.--all techniques in the writing of a novel thus become important as tools of the artist in fashioning an "eloquent media." In their unity of interrelationship they find their function. Organic form is that which is adapted to the special medium of the object of art so that the various elements of the object of art subdue their individuality in a fusion with all of the other elements. It is form adapted to matter; it is form emergent from the medium, from what is to be expressed, and from what has been experienced rather than form superimposed from without.

In the light of this, an object of art, then, is not merely a copy of an object in reality. It is a representation of not only the shape of the actuality but of the values and meanings of the shape. A novel is not merely a copy of life, it is a representation of the values emergent from the experiences of life. Here again, there is a difference of opinion between the school of naturalism and that of experiential realism. (The purpose of tracing the above line of philosophic reasoning is not to defend nor preach experiential realism in the novel, but to point out that the difference between it and other schools of literary thought is basically philosophical.)

On the expressiveness of an object of art, Dewey has this to say:



The expressiveness of the object of art is due to the fact that it presents a thorough and complete interpenetration of the materials of undergoing and of action, the latter including a reorganization of the matter brought with us from past experience. For, in the interpenetration, the latter is material not added by way of external association nor yet by way of superimposition upon sense qualities. The expressiveness of the object is the report and celebration of the complete fusion of what we undergo and what our activity of attentive perception brings into what we receive by means of the senses.<sup>36</sup>

Because the objects of art are expressive, they communicate. I do not say that communication to others is the intent of the artist. But it is the consequence of his work--which indeed lives only in communication when it operates in the experience of others.<sup>37</sup>

In the end, works of art are the only media of complete and unhindered communication between man and man that can occur in a world full of gulfs and walls that limit community of experience.<sup>38</sup>

It has already been mentioned that the artist undergoes a period of gestation during which the experience is distilled and formed into material which is the basis of the object of art. Collingwood argues that the artist primarily produces a mental image and that the object of art is "a bodily or perceptible thing" which has an exact relationship to the mental image in the mind of the artist. The artist, says Collingwood, creates two things:

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<sup>36</sup> Ibid., p. 103.

<sup>37</sup> Ibid., p. 104.

<sup>38</sup> Ibid., p. 105.





Primarily it is an "internal" or "mental" thing, something (as we commonly say) "existing in his head" and there only: something of the kind which we commonly call an experience. Secondly, it is a bodily or perceptible thing (a picture, statue, etc.) whose exact relation to this "mental" thing will need very careful definition. Of these two things, the first is obviously not anything that can be called a work of art, if work means something made in the sense in which a weaver makes cloth. But since it is the thing which the artist as such primarily produces, I shall argue that we are entitled to call it "the work of art proper." The second thing, the bodily and perceptible thing, I shall show to be only incidental to the first. The making of it is therefore not the activity in virtue of which a man is an artist, but only a subsidiary activity, incidental to that. And consequently this thing is a work of art, not in its own right, but only because of the relation in which it stands to the "mental" thing or experience of which I spoke just now. There is no such thing as an object d' art in itself; if we call any bodily and perceptible thing by that name or an equivalent we do so only because of the relation in which it stands to the aesthetic experience which is the "work of art proper."<sup>39</sup>

To which Dewey adds:

When an author puts on paper ideas that are already clearly conceived and consistently ordered, the real work has been previously done. Or, he may depend upon the greater perceptibility induced by the activity and its sensible report to direct his completion of the work. The mere act of transcription is esthetically irrelevant save as it enters integrally into the formation of an experience moving to completeness. Even the composition conceived in the head, and, therefore, physically private, is public in its significant content, since it is conceived with reference to execution in a product that is perceptible and hence belongs to the common world. Otherwise it would be an aberration or a passing dream. The urge to express through painting the perceived qualities of a landscape in continuous with demand for pencil or brush. Without external

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<sup>39</sup> Collingwood, op. cit., p. 37.



embodiment, an experience remains incomplete; physiologically and functionally, sense organs are motor organs and are connected, by means of distribution of energies in the human body and not merely anatomically, with other motor organs. It is not linguistic accident that "building," "construction," "work," designate both a process and its finished product. Without the meaning of the verb that of the noun remains blank.<sup>40</sup>

And:

...a...product, if it is artistic, presupposes a prior period of gestation in which doings and perceptions projected in imagination interact and mutually modify one another. Every work of art follows the plan of, and pattern of, a complete experience, rendering it more intensely and concentratedly felt.<sup>41</sup>

The distinction between that which is an object of art in the work-of-art process and that which is an object whose shape, form, content or subject matter gives only a pleasurable emotion to the viewer is stressed by both Collingwood and Dewey. Collingwood refers to the latter as an artifact, made by a skilled worker for a non-artistic purpose. Under this category he includes works of religious and magical intent. For example, the etchings on primitive implements are magical in purpose: an appeal to supernatural beings for fortune; the implement itself not primarily designed for an object of art still conveys a pleasurable emotion through its graceful lines and form.

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<sup>40</sup> Dewey, op. cit., p. 51.

<sup>41</sup> Ibid., p. 52.



The spears of South Pacific warrior tribes hanging in museums of fine arts are a case in point.

The object of art is expressive of the artist's viewpoint. It is a means of communicating the realized values of a primary experience, and in the extent to which it contributes in this manner to the work-of-art totality it finds its values.

For the adequate expression of the purpose of a work of art [object of art] from the artist's point of view--assuming that there could be one which was not identical with the work of art in question--could be only the creation of another work of art, namely a critical essay, to be substituted for the work of art being criticized.<sup>42</sup>

Literature as an object of art:<sup>43</sup> As an object of art, literature has the two-fold characteristic of conveying meaning by both printed symbol and sonic symbol. Any discussion of literature as an art form necessitates a consideration of semantics too extensive to be discussed here in full; however, Dewey's outline of literature as an art form is indicative of the necessary considerations and is thus particularly pertinent:

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<sup>42</sup> George Boas, A Primer for Critics, (Baltimore: The Johns Hopkins Press, 1937), p. 84.

<sup>43</sup> Cf. Greene, op. cit., pp. 177 ff., for an analytical inquiry into literature as an art medium.



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In contrast with the arts so far mentioned, literature exhibits one unique trait. Sounds, which are directly or as symbolized in print, their medium, are not sounds as such, as in music, but sounds that have been subjected to transforming art before literature deals with them.... The art of literature thus works with loaded dice: its material is charged with meanings they [words] have absorbed through immemorial time. Its material thus has an intellectual force superior to that of any other art, while it equals the capacity of architecture to present the values of collective life.

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Continuity of meaning and value is the essence of language. For it sustains a continuing culture. For this reason words carry an almost infinite charge of overtones and resonances. "Transferred values" of emotions experienced from a childhood that cannot be consciously recovered belong to them. Speech is indeed the mother tongue. It is informed with the temperament and the ways of viewing and interpreting life that are characteristic of the culture of a continuing social group. Since science aims to speak a tongue from which these traits are eliminated, only scientific literature is completely translatable....

For this continuity is not confined to letters in its written and printed form. The grandma telling stories of "once upon a time" to her children at her knee passes on and colors the past: she prepares material for literature and may be herself an artist. The capacity of sounds to preserve and report the values of all the varied experiences of the past, and to follow with accuracy every changing shade of feeling and idea, confers upon their combinations and permutations the power to create a new experience, oftentimes an experience more poignantly felt than that which comes from things themselves. Contacts with the latter would remain on a merely physical plane of shock were it not that things have absorbed into themselves meanings developed in the art of communication. Intense and vivid realizations of the meanings of the events and situations of the universe can be achieved only through a medium already instinct with meaning. The architectural, pictorial and sculptural are always unconsciously surrounded and enriched by values that

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proceed from speech. It is impossible because of the nature of our organic constitution to exclude this effect....

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Words as media are not exhausted in their power to convey possibility. Nouns, verbs, adjectives express generalized conditions--that is to say character. Even a proper name can but denote character in its limitation to an individual exemplification. Words attempt to convey the nature of things and events. Indeed it is through language that these have a nature over and above a brute flux of existence. That they can convey character, nature, not in abstract conceptual form, but as exhibited and operating in individuals is made evident in the novel and drama, whose business it is to exploit this particular function of language. For characters are presented in situations that evoke their natures, giving particularity of existence to the generality of potentiality. At the same time situations are defined and made concrete. For all we know of any situation is what it does to and with us: that is its nature. Our conception of types of character and the manifold variations of these types is due mainly to literature. We observe, note and judge the people about us in terms that are derived from literature, including, of course, biography and history with novel and drama. Ethical treatises in the past have been impotent in comparison in portraying characters so that they remain in the consciousness of mankind. The correlativity of character and situation is illustrated in the fact that whenever situations are left inchoate and wavering, characters are found to be vague and indefinite--something to be guessed at, not embodied, in short are uncharacterized.<sup>44</sup>

Art as a Process: The appreciator. "There is then creative reading as well as creative writing."<sup>45</sup>

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<sup>44</sup> Op. cit., pp. 239 ff.; cf. Greene, op. cit., pp. 37 ff.; cf. post, Chap. Nine.

<sup>45</sup> Emerson, "The American Scholar," Carpenter, op. cit., p. 57.





The person to whom the object of art is offered must participate in it for the work-of-art process to function in its fullest sense. It is with the appreciator that the work-of-art process reaches its culmination and fulfillment. The appreciator is thus more than an inactive spectator. His role is one of participation rather than passivity. Because of the causes that motivate him, which are at first emotional, the appreciator-response, as much as the artist's reaction, is a field for psychological investigation.<sup>46</sup>

Each person viewing an object of art does not necessarily reach a level of participation that may be termed a re-creation of the primary experience. In failing to do this, he may be said to enjoy the object of art on a non-artistic (and non-esthetic) level. An appreciator in the work-of-art process must be sensitive to the meanings offered him in the object of art before the work of art process is completed. On the artistic level, participation includes enjoyment, as well as approbation. This is inherent in the attitude of the appreciator, which is conditioned by the entire antecedent continuum of his experience, environment, and culture. These factors give meaning to the meaning of what is offered him by the object

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<sup>46</sup> Cf. I. A. Richards, Principles of Literary Criticism, (New York: Harcourt, Brace and Company, 1926), Chap. XI.



of art.

An object of art thus serves as a means of stimulating the sensitivity of the appreciator to a recognition and realization of the values it represents. Since an object of art serves this double purpose of conveying a meaning and arousing a response, it is necessary to discriminate between its values as a communicant and as a stimulus, although both functions are interrelated and co-acting in its totality as an object of art. Failure to so discriminate may lead to an ontological consideration of the object of art. (The esthetic emotions aroused in the appreciator by the "sensuousness" of the object of art are included under the function of the object of art as a stimulus.)

Perception by the appreciator of the object of art exists on several levels. First, there is the sensory "seeing" of the object of art. As a result of this neural activity, a mental stimulus is set up which may be fulfilled by a reaction of emotional response. This is as far as the "enjoyment" level of appreciation goes. In the case of the more sensitive appreciator, there is also an intellectual response--which is, itself, a stimulus to produce an intellectual participation. This reaction need be only mental. "...every perception probably includes a response in the form of incipient action."<sup>47</sup>

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<sup>47</sup> Richards, Principles, p. 107.



Considering the object of art as a means of stimulating the appreciator leads to a consideration of the artist-appreciator relationship. Greene defines it as a responsibility of the artist, primarily:

The task of the creative artist differs correspondingly in the two cases. In the temporal arts he must so control the rhythmic character of the successive portions of the composition as to facilitate their reconstruction in the auditor's memory so that, at the end of the performance, he may possess a cumulative impression of the several parts in their relation to one another and so achieve a sense of the rhythmic character of the whole. In the non-temporal arts his task is rather to stimulate in the spectator the requisite artistically controlled empathic or associative response, by making the composition as a whole arouse in him at the outset a sense of its larger rhythmic unity which is then confirmed, intensified, and enriched by the subsequent more or less leisurely exploration of the several artistic units and relations.<sup>48</sup>

However, certain elements are necessary in the appreciator before they can be aroused. Meanings, and symbols representative of these meanings must be shared by the artist and the appreciator before the artist can use these meanings to arouse emotive and realizational states in the appreciator. Since the artist creates in the co-conscious influence of his environmental and cultural Zeitgeist and the appreciator--whose response may be considered as an ecological reaction--re-creates under similar influences,

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<sup>48</sup> Op. cit., p. 223.





it becomes important to restate a thesis made in the Introduction: it is necessary to consider an object of art in the light of its creator's philosophic and artistic perspectives, for these are cultural influences affecting him. A similar claim may be made for the necessity of considering the biographical and historical data pertinent to the creator-artist.

Richards outlines "a stream of reaction in which six distinct kinds of events may be distinguished:

- I The visual sensations of the printed words.
- II Images very closely associated with these sensations.
- III Images relatively free.
- IV References to, or 'thinkings of,' various things.
- V Emotions.
- VI Affective-volitional attitudes." 49

It is only when the appreciator experience is based on the last of these levels that the work of art experience begins to take place. A perception of the wholeness and completeness of the organic unity of the work of art is what is necessary in the appreciator.

But receptivity [says Dewey] is not passivity. It, too, is a process consisting of a series of responsive acts that accumulate toward objective fulfillment. Otherwise there is not perception but recognition.<sup>50</sup>

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<sup>49</sup> Richards, Principles, pp. 117-18.

<sup>50</sup> Dewey, op. cit., p. 52.



The antecedent continuum of the appreciator is what he brings with him in participating in a work of art. As the richness and fullness of this antecedent continuum varies according to the individual, so varies the degree in which the appreciator can participate in the work of art process.

Thus, in presenting an object of art to the appreciator, the artist, in the act of presentation, demands certain things of the appreciator. The object of art stimulates an appreciator-response and it is this reaction that the artist demands. However:

A poet may, it is true, make an unlimited demand upon his reader, and the greatest poets make the greatest claim, but the demand made must be proportional to the poet's own contribution.<sup>51</sup>

It may be seen from this that both the artist and the appreciator contribute to the process, and, as a result, both are enriched by their participation in it. The artist is enriched by the experience that is found in the act of creating the expressive object; the appreciator is enriched by his response to the object of art, which is "...a substance so formed that it can enter into the experiences of others and enable them to have more intense and more fully rounded out experiences of their own."<sup>52</sup>

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<sup>51</sup> Richards, Principles, p. 200.

<sup>52</sup> Dewey, op. cit., p. 109.





In a consideration such as this of the "supreme form of the communicative activity,"<sup>53</sup> which is the work of art process, it is thus seen that the "universality" of an object of art is not based on an ontological value.<sup>54</sup> Merely because an object of art stimulates (which may be considered inherent in the function of the object) does not necessarily mean a response by the appreciator. Stimuli exist in varying degrees of intensity and are therefore dependent for their effectiveness in calling forth a response upon the sensitivity of the appreciator. The process exists only as the appreciator contributes by participation.

A work of art no matter how old and classic [points out Dewey] is actually, not just potentially, a work of art only when it lives in some individualized experience. As a piece of parchment, of marble, of canvas, it remains (subject to the ravages of time) self-identical throughout the ages. But as a work of art, it is recreated every time it is esthetically

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<sup>53</sup> Richards, Principles, p. 26.

<sup>54</sup> Heyl, Bernard, New Bearings in Esthetics and Art Criticism, (New Haven: Yale University Press, 1943), pp. 105-06, says: "As a result of our modern environment, our ideas about the nature and function of art are unlike those of the past: consequently we today see the art of former epochs with eyes differently focused from those which first saw that art...if a quality recognized by one period as a certain kind of value becomes for another period an entirely different value, how can the value reasonably be considered to have ontological substance in the object?"



experienced. No one doubts this fact in the rendering of a musical score; no one supposes that the lines and dots on paper are more than the recorded means of evoking the work of art....It is absurd to ask what an artist "really" meant by his product; he himself would find different meanings in it at different days and hours and in different stages of his own development. If he could be articulate, he would say "I meant just that, and that means whatever you or anyone can honestly, that is in virtue of your own vital experience, get out of it." Any other idea makes the boasted "universality" of the work of art a synonym for monotonous identity. The Parthenon, or whatever, is universal because it can continuously inspire new personal realizations in experience.<sup>55</sup>

The function, then, of the appreciator is that of re-creating the emotional and intellectual experiences which are offered to him. The appreciator may be the non-creative artist (in that he creates no physical object of art) yet sensitivity is demanded of him as much as of the artist. The appreciator may be the artist himself once the object of art is completed, and as appreciator the artist may discover values communicated by the object of art which he had no conscious realization of having included. Whether these emerged out of his subconscious during the creative act, or whether they are a stimulus to additional perceptions of new values of previous experiences--or both--cannot be fully discussed here, although an awareness of them must be entertained.

The appreciator--in the case of literature, the reader--seeks more than mere enjoyment. "Escapism" is not alone the reason for his viewing, listening, or



reading. As the appreciator is a human being and thus constantly beset by the problems of human existence, he cannot, with any validity, deny himself the experiences of enrichment that are offered to him in a work of art. Life has meaning to it. Man is not animal alone; he is concerned with that which gives meaning to life. It is this search<sup>56</sup> that has engrossed the thinking man since the first philosopher. Art is the attempt to give meaning to life. As participant in the process of art, the appreciator is concerned with the meaning of experience and is thus a philosopher, as is the artist who presents him with this experience.

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<sup>56</sup> Cf. John Dewey, The Quest for Certainty, (New York: Minton, Balch and Company, 1929).





## CHAPTER THREE

### ART AND EXPERIENCE

The term "art." The term "art" is an abstraction which requires definition before it may be used constructively. Almost every abstraction is set up, in a constructive sense, according to the philosophy of the one who uses the term and again by the hearer--or reader--of the term. If an abstraction--any abstraction--is to be used by the critic it is as necessary for him to clarify its special meaning in the sense in which he uses it as it is necessary for him to use, and define, his critical standards. Indeed, they are oftentimes the same. This is, of course, a semantic problem, but the critic is concerned with communication and thus directly deeply involved with semantics. Whether the term is given a volitional definition or one that emerges out of a definite pattern of thinking is something else for the critic to make known, since this is indicative of the depth and amount of connotation to be attached to the abstract term.<sup>1</sup>

"Art" is here to be understood as having all the

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<sup>1</sup> Cf. I. A. Richards, Principles of Literary Criticism, and Practical Criticism.



meanings which adhere to the term as a result of its emergence from the Modern Climate of Opinion, as an abstraction defined and made into a constructive frame of reference by that philosophic area.

Art and experience. "Art" is thus to be considered as "a conception that discloses the way in which these works idealize qualities found in common experience."<sup>2</sup> It is "a conception that connects it with the activities of a live creature in its environment."<sup>3</sup>

Whatever experience makes an effect upon civilization to change the culture of that civilization is a work of art. (This statement is to be considered in the light of the definitions previously given to the terms "civilization," "culture," and the totality of a "work of art.") Therefore all art, in order to be valid, must be functional. Its function is to clarify human experience, not merely to be decorative. Art, considered in this manner, becomes significant in addition to being esthetic.

This concern for the emergent human values in a work of art has experience for a base. Artistic experience, according to the Modern Climate of Opinion, is the

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<sup>2</sup> John Dewey, Art As Experience. ~~1911~~ p. 11.

<sup>3</sup> Ibid., p. 27.





only means of passing on and adding to a culture, for a culture is dependent upon the expression and development of artistic experience. "The arts," says I. A. Richards, "are our storehouse of recorded values."<sup>4</sup>

In the arts [he continues] we find the record in the only form in which these things can be recorded of the experiences which have seemed worth having to the most sensitive and discriminating persons.<sup>5</sup>

The existence of art...is proof [writes Dewey] that man uses the materials and energies of nature with intent to expand his own life and that he does so in accord with the structure of his organism--brain, sense-organs, and muscular system. Art is the living and concrete proof that man is capable of restoring consciously, and thus on the plane of meaning, the union of sense, need impulse and action characteristic of the live creature. The intervention of consciousness adds regulation, power of selection, and re-disposition. Thus it varies the arts in ways without end. But its intervention also leads in time to the idea of art as a conscious idea--the greatest intellectual achievement in the history of humanity.<sup>6</sup>

Dewey's especial emphasis is placed on realizing that art must find its roots in common experience:

...The work of art develops and accentuates what is characteristically valuable in things of everyday enjoyment. The art product will then be seen to issue from the latter, when the full meaning of ordinary experience is expresses...<sup>7</sup>

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<sup>4</sup> Principles of Literary Criticism, p. 32.

<sup>5</sup> Ibid., p. 33.

<sup>6</sup> Op. cit., p. 25.

<sup>7</sup> Ibid., p. 11.



In the integration of the ingredients of an experience, Dewey points out, lies its esthetic quality:

For then its varied parts are linked one to another, and do not merely succeed one another. And the parts though their experienced linkage move toward a consummation and close, not merely to cessation in time. This consummation, moreover, does not wait in consciousness for the whole undertaking to be finished. It is anticipated throughout and is recurrently savored with special intensity.<sup>8</sup>

The constant impingement of artistic experiences should thus serve to sharpen one's sensitivity to the value of the living process. Life is not to be found in abstractions but in experience. On the other hand, an intellectual experience is not complete by itself. It is as Emerson contends: there must be an interaction between intellect, emotion and will before an experience has validity. In the harmonic, mutual interrelation of the intellectual faculty, the "will to action," and the emotion of "human fellow-love" a full experience emerges as a cumulative achievement.

The intellectual faculty is not confined to man alone. As intellectual, rather than intellectual, it is a process of thought and thought-action, whether on the conscious, mental level, or on a level of sub-conscious, per-mental instinct. Thus, even an amoeba has an in-

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<sup>8</sup> Ibid., p. 55. Italics not in original.



tellective faculty. This faculty is one of the fundamental processes of life, and is so natural as to be implicit in all organic life.

Man is a single entity, as a society, of which are co-operative functions. In a democratic cultural pattern every member of the society--which includes all--must be a participant. He achieves this participation in his culture by a sensitivity to values not based on material things. It is the meaning of things and not the remoteness or strangeness of them or the things themselves that are important.<sup>9</sup> Since it is the artist's function to stimulate this sensitivity, art is then "part of the significant life of an organized community."<sup>10</sup>

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<sup>9</sup> The achieved meaning of experience in literature is a participative experience for the reader. The problem of meaning is to make clear the values and meaning of experience as opposed to circumstance.

<sup>10</sup> Dewey, op. cit., p. 7; Cf. Collingwood, Principles of Art, Chap. XIV, "The artist and the community."





## CHAPTER FOUR

### JOHN STEINBECK: PHYLETIC HUMANIST<sup>1</sup>

Phyletic. "Pertaining to phylum; racial."  
"Phylon...In biology, tribe, race or line of descent."  
"Phylum...One of the large, primary divisions into which plants and animals are divided (on the theory of kinship), ranking below a kingdom and above an order."<sup>2</sup>

The philosophic perspective of John Steinbeck. In classifying the philosophy of John Steinbeck, one finds upon examination of its elements that it is a philosophy completely within the Modern Climate of Opinion. Exactly how much Steinbeck owes to Ralph Waldo Emerson, John Dewey, Alfred North Whitehead, et al., is a matter of speculation. What is more important is that while he may owe them an intellectual debt for this background of philosophic thought, he owes no one but himself for the integration of these ideas into a conscious and active philosophy which is the greatest single influence in all his writings. Again, whether or not this philosophy in

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<sup>1</sup> For the term, "Phyletic Humanist," I am indebted to Professor E. A. Post.

<sup>2</sup> Webster's New American Dictionary, Edward N. Teall and C. Ralph Taylor, eds., (Boston: Books, Inc., 1944), p. 730.



its special consideration of man as a species organism is original with Steinbeck is beside the point. It is; it exists, and it is therefore an important determinant which no conscientious critic can overlook. Because it is so dominant an influence in every line he wrote, an inquiry into it is essential in any critical estimate of his work as an artist.

Steinbeck is concerned with the unity of life, of life and Nature, of Nature and the world and the universe, in so all-encompassing a relationship that it is bounded only by an Einsteinian conception of time. Steinbeck is not, probably, the first to relate Emerson's unity of life with Einstein's relativity (relativity of spiritual life to the relativity of matter), but his method is the result of his investigation and work in marine biology. His focus is upon "species" and the relational aspects of the individual to phyletic society, of one species to another and of all to environment in a continuum that includes pre-historic as well as astral time. Because of this focus upon species is so important in his philosophy, it (the philosophy) has been termed "phyletic humanism." The humanism of the term is the humanism of Julian Huxley, of Whitehead, of Dewey, of Bertrand Russell. It is, more especially, the warm human understanding of Emerson. And, as Whitehead and Russell and Dewey have their minor philo-





sophic differences which are almost irreconcilable, so too does Steinbeck differ.

Secondly in philosophic effect upon Steinbeck's works, is his focus upon non-teleological thinking. The elements of this, as well as of his phyletic humanism, are given in detail in Sea of Cortez, written in collaboration with Edward F. Ricketts. Sea of Cortez is an unusual volume. It is called by Steinbeck, "a leisurely journal of travel and research," and the title is apt, if "travel" is not limited to merely physical wandering. Here, obviously, is an excursion into thought. Edward F. Ricketts, is a marine biologist. His collaboration is mostly apparent in the second section; for, while the first part of Sea of Cortez is a travel book, journal and philosophic essay, the second part is a scientific report--with color-plates, illustrations, and an annotated bibliography--on the marine invertebrates of the Panamic fauna in the Gulf of California (the Sea of Cortez).

Steinbeck is a clear and forceful writer. There is, then, no need to interpret what he says. In the following pages excerpts from Sea of Cortez are presented, which, by themselves, are more than indicative of his philosophic perspective. When related to excerpts from Dewey and Emerson, these elements of Steinbeck's philosophy are clearly seen to form an integrated pattern of thought

1. The first part of the paper discusses the importance of the study of the history of the United States. It is argued that a knowledge of the past is essential for a full understanding of the present and for the development of a sound policy for the future. The author points out that the history of the United States is a story of struggle and achievement, of the triumph of the individual over adversity and of the growth of a great nation from a small colony.

2. The second part of the paper is a survey of the history of the United States from the time of the first settlement to the present. It covers the early years of the colonies, the struggle for independence, the formation of the Constitution, the westward expansion, the Civil War, and the Reconstruction. The author discusses the major events and figures of American history and the impact of these events on the development of the nation.

3. The third part of the paper is a discussion of the present state of the United States. It examines the political, economic, and social conditions of the country and the challenges it faces. The author argues that the United States is a great nation, but it is not perfect. There are many problems that need to be solved, and it is the duty of every citizen to work for the betterment of the country.

4. The fourth part of the paper is a conclusion. It summarizes the main points of the paper and offers some suggestions for the future. The author believes that the United States has a bright future, but it must first learn from its past and face its present challenges with courage and determination.

which is in the Modern Climate of Opinion.

which is in the Modern Climate of Opinion.

"The design of a book is the pattern of a reality controlled and shaped by the mind of the writer."<sup>1</sup>

"It would be good to know the impulse [of scientific investigation] truly, not to be confused by the 'services to science' platitudes or the other little mazes into which we entice our minds so that they will not know what we are doing."<sup>2</sup>

"We have a book to write about the Gulf of California. We could do one of several things about its design. But we have decided to let it form itself:<sup>1</sup> its boundaries a boat and a sea; its duration a six weeks' charter time;

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1. "Antecedent subject-matter is not instantaneously changed into the matter of a work of art in the mind of an artist. It is a developing process." (John Dewey, Art As Experience, p. 11.)

2. Cf. post, no. 48.

3. 1. "Form as it is presented in the fine arts, is the art of making clear what is involved in the organization of space and time prefigured in every course of

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<sup>1</sup> John Steinbeck and Edward F. Ricketts, Sea of Cortez, (New York: The Viking Press, 1941), p. 1.

<sup>2</sup> Loc. cit.





its subject everything we could see and think and even imagine;<sup>11</sup> its limits--our own without reservation."<sup>3</sup>

"We knew that what we would see and record and construct would be warped, as all knowledge patterns are warped, first, by the collective pressure and stream of our time and race, second by the thrust of our individual personalities. But knowing this, we might not fall into too many holes--we might maintain some balance between our warp and the separate thing, the external reality. The oneness of these two might take its contribution from both. For example: the Mexican sierra has 'XVII-15-IX' spines

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a developing life-experience." (Dewey, op. cit., p. 24.)

ii. "Only when the constituent parts of a whole have the unique **end** of contributing to the consummation of a conscious experience, do design and shape lose superimposed character and become form." (Ibid., p. 117.)

iii. "There is in nature, even below the level of life, something more than mere flux and change. Form is arrived at whenever a stable, even though moving equilibrium is reached....Order is not imposed from without but

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<sup>3</sup> Loc. cit.

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in the dorsal fin. These can easily be counted. But if the sierra strikes hard on the line so that our hands are burned, if the fish sounds and nearly escapes and finally comes in over the rail, his colors pulsing and his tail beating the air, a whole new relational externality has come into being--an entity which is more than the sum of the fish plus the fisherman."<sup>4</sup>

"The man with his pickled fish [working in a laboratory with specimens he has not gathered] has set down one truth and has recorded in his experience many lies. The fish is not that color, that texture, that dead, nor

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is made out of the relations of harmonious interactions that energies bear to one another." (Ibid., p. 14.)

iv. Cf. post, no. 18.

4. 1. "An experience has pattern and structure, because it is not just doing and undergoing in alternation, but consists of them in relationship....This relationship is what gives meaning; to grasp it is the objective of all intelligence. The scope and content of the relations measure the content of an experience." (Dewey, Art As

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<sup>4</sup> Ibid., p. 2.



does he smell that way."<sup>5</sup>

"We knew that what seemed to us true could be only relatively true anyway. There is no other kind of observation."<sup>6</sup>

"We could not observe a completely objective Sea of Cortez anyway, for in that lonely and uninhabited Gulf our boat and ourselves would change it the moment we entered. By going there, we would bring a new factor to the Gulf. Let us consider that factor and not be betrayed by this myth of permanent objective reality....Let us go... into the Sea of Cortez, realizing that we become forever a

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Experience, p. 44.)

ii. "The senses are the organs through which the live creature participates directly in the ongoings of the world about him. In this participation the varied wonder and splendor of this world are made actual for him in the qualities he experiences." (Ibid., p. 22.)

5. i. "Since sense-organs with their connected motor apparatus are the means of this participation, any

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<sup>5</sup> Ibid., pp. 2-3.

<sup>6</sup> Ibid., p. 3.





part of it....And if we seem a small factor in a huge pattern, nevertheless it is of relative importance.'"<sup>7</sup>

"We have looked into the tide pools and seen the little animals feeding and reproducing and killing for food. We name them and describe them and, out of long watching, arrive at some conclusion about their habits so that we say, 'This species typically does thus and so,' but we do not objectively observe our own species as a species, although we know the individuals fairly well. When it seems that men may be kinder to men, that wars may not come again, we completely ignore the record of our species.

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and every derogation of them, whether practical or theoretical, is at once effect and cause of a narrowed and dulled life-experience." (Loc. cit.)

ii. "Experience is limited by all the causes which interfere with perception of the relations between undergoing and doing." (Ibid., p. 44.)

7. "Direct experience comes from nature and man interacting with each other." (Ibid., p. 16.)

8. i. "Our country has been favored above other

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<sup>7</sup> Loc. cit.



If we used the same smug observations on ourselves that we do on hermit crabs we would be forced to say, with the information at hand, 'It is one diagnostic trait of Homo Sapiens that groups of individuals are periodically infected with a feverish nervousness which causes the individual to turn on and destroy, not only his own kind, but the works of his own kind. It is not known whether this be caused by a virus, some airborne spore, or whether it be a species reaction to some meteorological stimulus as yet undetermined.' Hope, which is another species diagnostic trait--the hope that this may not always be--does not in the least change the observable past and present.

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nations in its geographical position and by its history. Our remoteness from the great warring countries, our size and our resources have for the most part protected us from the entanglements, the jealousies, suspicions and animosities which the long, sad centuries have decreed to Europe. ...We are sinners above other nations when without the excuse of European nations we surrender to pride, exclusiveness, distrust and the spirit of isolation and the other tendencies that make war so easy." (Dewey, Intelligence in the Modern World, pp. 511-12.)



When two crayfish meet, they usually fight. One would say that perhaps they might not at a future time, but without some mutation it is not likely that they will lose this trait. And perhaps our species is not likely to forego war without some psychic mutation which at present, at least, does not seem imminent. And if one place the blame for killing and destroying on economic insecurity, on inequality, on injustice, he is simply stating the proposition in another way. We have what we are. Perhaps the crayfish feels the itch of jealousy, or perhaps he is sexually insecure. The effect is that he fights. When in the world there shall come twenty,

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ii. "The imminence of the 'next world war' has caused the last World War to recede from thought, discussion and imagination except in negative ways. During the progress of the World War positive attitudes and hopes were generated and put forward for the creation of a better human society. The fact that these hopes were betrayed and objectives failed to be realized is evidence of our failure to take advantage of the opportunity that was unquestionably there. It is not a condemnation of those hopes and objectives." (Ibid., p. 416.)

iii. Cf. Dewey, "On International Cooperation,"





thirty, fifty years without evidence of our murder trait, under whatever system of justice or economic security, then we may have a contrasting habit pattern to examine. So far there is no such situation. So far the murder trait of our species is as regular and observable as our various sexual habits."<sup>8</sup>

"The true biologist deals with life, with teeming boisterous life, and learns something from it, learns that the first rule of life is living....Having certain tendencies, he must move along their lines to the limit of their potentialities."<sup>9</sup>

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Intelligence in the Modern World, pp. 499-503.

9. "The first great consideration is that life goes on in an environment; not merely in it but because of it, through interaction with it. No creature lives merely under its skin; its subcutaneous organs are means of connection with what lies beyond its bodily frame, and to which, in order to live, it must adjust itself, by accommodation and defense but also by conquest. At every moment, the living creature is exposed to dangers from

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<sup>8</sup> Ibid., pp. 16-17.

<sup>9</sup> Ibid., p. 29.



"We have thought often of this mass of sea-memory, or sea-thought, which lives deep in the mind. If one ask for a description of the unconscious, even the answer symbol will usually be in terms of a dark water into which the light descends only a short distance. And we have thought how the human fetus has, at one stage of its development, vestigial gill-slits. If the gills are a component of the developing human, it is not unreasonable to suppose a parallel or concurrent mind or psyche development. If there be a life memory strong enough to leave its symbol in vestigial gills, the preponderantly aquatic

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its surroundings, and at every moment, it must draw upon something in its surroundings to satisfy its needs. The career and destiny of a living being are bound up with its interchanges with its environment, not externally but in the most intimate way." (Dewey, Art As Experience, p. 13.)

10. 1. "The larger rhythms of nature are so bound up with the conditions of even elementary human subsistence, that they cannot have escaped the notice of man as soon as he became conscious of his occupations and the conditions that rendered them effective." (Ibid., p. 147)



symbols in the individual unconscious might well be the indications of a group psyche-memory which is the foundation of the whole unconscious....There are numbers of examples wherein even invertebrates seem to remember and to react to stimuli no longer violent enough to cause the reaction. Perhaps, next to that of the sea, the strongest memory in us is that of the moon. But moon and sea and tide are one. Even now, the tide establishes a measurable, although minute, weight differential....According to a theory of George Darwin (son of Charles Darwin), in pre-Cambrian times, more than a thousand million years ago,

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ii. "The cycle of irregular regularities in the shape and behaviour of the moon seemed fraught with mysterious import for the welfare of man, beast, and crops, and inextricably bound up with the mystery of generation. With these larger rhythms were bound up those of the ever-recurring cycles of growth from seed to a maturity that reproduced ~~the~~ the seed; the reproduction of animals, the relation of male and female, the never-ceasing round of births and deaths." (Ibid., p. 147-48)

iii. "The existence of a multitude of illustrations of rhythm in nature is a familiar fact. Oft cited





the tides were tremendous; and the weight differential would have been correspondingly large. The moon-pull must have been the most important single environmental factor of littoral animals. Displacement and body weight then must certainly have decreased and increased tremendously with the rotation and phases of the moon, particularly if the orbit was at that time elliptic. The sun's reinforcement was probably slighter, relatively.

"Consider, then, the effect of a decrease in pressure on gonads turgid with eggs or sperm, already almost bursting and awaiting the slight extra pull to discharge. (Note

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are the ebb and flow of tides, the cycle of lunar changes, the pulses in the flow of blood, the anabolism and katabolism of all living processes. What is not so generally perceived is that every uniformity and regularity of change in nature is a rhythm. The terms 'natural law' and 'natural rhythm' are synonymous. As far as nature is to us more than a flux lacking order in its mutable changes, as far as it is more than a whirlpool of confusions, it is marked by these rhythms. Formulae for these rhythms constitute the canons of science. Astronomy, geology, dynamics, and kinematics record various rhythms that are the orders of different kinds of change. The very con-



also the dehiscence of ova through the body walls of the ptychaete worms. These ancient worms have their ancestry rooted in the Cambrian and they are little changed.) Now if we admit for the moment the potency of this tidal effect, we have only to add the concept of inherited psychic pattern we call 'instinct' to get an inkling of the force of the lunar rhythm so deeply rooted in marine animals and even in higher animals and in man.

"...Tidal effects are mysterious and dark in the soul, and it may well be noted that even today the effect of the tides is more valid and strong and widespread than

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ceptions of molecule, atom, and electron arise out of the need of formulating lesser and subtler rhythms that are discovered. Mathematics are the most generalized statements conceivable corresponding to the most universally obtaining rhythms. The one, two, three, four, of counting, the construction of lines and angles into geometric patterns, the highest flights of vector analysis, are means of recording or of imposing rhythm." (Ibid., p. 149)

iv. "The nature of experience is determined by the essential conditions of life. While man is other than bird and beast, he shares basic vital functions with them and has to make the same basal adjustments if he is to



is generally supposed....One could safely predict that all physiological processes correspondingly might be shown to be influenced by the tides, could we but read the indices with sufficient delicacy.

"It appears that the physical evidence for this theory of George Darwin is more or less hypothetical, not in fact, but by interpretation, and that critical reasoning could conceivably throw out the whole process and with it the biologic connotations, because of unknown links and factors. Perhaps it should read the other way around. The animals themselves would seem to offer striking con-

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continue the process of living. Having the same vital needs, man derives the means by which he breathes, moves, looks and listens, the very brain with which he coordinates his senses and his movements, from his animal forbears. The organs with which he maintains himself in being are not of himself alone, but by the grace of struggles and achievements of a long line of animal ancestry." (Ibid., p. 13)

11. "Society is a wave. The wave moves onward, but the water of which it is composed does not. The same particle does not rise from the valley to the ridge. Its unity is only phenomenal. The persons who make up a nation



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firmation to the tidal theory of cosmogony. One is almost forced to postulate some such theory if he would account causally for this primitive impress. It would seem far-fetched to attribute the strong lunar effects actually observable in breeding animals to the present fairly weak tidal forces only, or to coincidence. There is tied up to the most primitive and powerful racial or collective instinct a rhythm sense or 'memory' which affects everything and which in the past was probably more potent than it is now. It would at least be more plausible to attribute these profound effects to devastating and instinct-

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to-day, next year die, and their experience dies with them." (Ralph Waldo Emerson, "Self-Reliance")

12. "What the live creature retains from the past and what it expects from the future operate as directions in the present." (Dewey, Art As Experience, p. 19)

13. Cf. John Dewey, The Quest For Certainty.

14. 1. Cf. S. I. Hayakawa, Language in Action, fourth edition, (New York: Harcourt, Brace and Company, 1946), Chap. 10.

11. "The affective connotations of a word are

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searing tidal influences active during the formative times of the early race history of organisms; and whether or not any mechanism has been discovered or is discoverable to carry on this imprint through the germ plasms, the fact remains that the imprint is there. The imprint is in us and...in the palolo worm, in mussel worms, in chitons and in the menstrual cycle of women....The harvest of symbols seems to have been implanted in the soft rich soil of our pre-humanity. Symbol, the serpent, the sea, and the moon might well be only the signal light that the psycho-physiological warp exists."<sup>10</sup>

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more powerful than the informative....

"These mental blockages which so many of us have prevent us from meeting our 'insoluble' problems with the only approach which can ever help us solve them: the extensional approach..." (Ibid., p. 188)

15. "The world is full of things that are indifferent and even hostile to life; the very processes by which life is maintained tend to throw it out of gear with its surroundings. Nevertheless, if life continues and if in continuing it expands, there is an overcoming of factors

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<sup>10</sup>Ibid., pp. 32-34.



Certainly, if we admit a biologic inheritance and continuum, we must also admit to a psychologic inheritance and continuum which began with the physical development of the motor nerves and has its own psychologic-racial memories, and which parallels the development of the organism, no matter to what degree of development the organism has attained. This psycho-biologic racial inheritance is life, and a part of the totality of man's antecedent continuum.--S. N. W.

"Then we passed Point Sur and the waves flattened out into a ground-swell and increased in speed. Tony the master said, 'Of course, it's always that way. The point draws the waves.' Another might say, 'The waves come greatly to the point,' and in both statements there would be a good primitive exposition of the relation between

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of opposition and conflict; there is a transformation of them into differentiated aspects of a higher powered and more significant life. The marvel of organic, of vital, adaption through expansion (instead of by contraction and passive accomodation) actually takes place. Here in germ are balance and harmony attained through rhythm. Equilibrium comes about not mechanically and inertly but out of, and because of, tension." (Dewey, Art As Experience, p. 14)

16. "Even more important is the fact that the organism which responds in production of the experienced object is one whose tendencies of observation, desire and emotion,





giver and receiver. This relation would be through waves; wave to wave to wave, each of which is connected by torsion to its inshore fellow and touches it enough, although it has gone before, to be affected by its torsion. And so on to the shore, and to the point where the last wave, if you think from the sea, and the first if you think from the shore, touches and breaks. And it is important where you are thinking from."<sup>11</sup>

"There is probably a unified-field hypothesis available in navigation as in all things. The internal factors would be the boat, the controls, the engine, and the crew,

are shaped by prior experiences. It carries past experiences in itself not by conscious memory but by direct charge." (Ibid., p. 122)

17. "Why is the attempt to connect the higher and ideal things of experience with basic vital roots so often regarded as betrayal of their nature and denial of their value? Why is there repulsion when the high achievements of fine arts are brought into connection with common life, the life we share with all living creatures? Why is life thought of as an affair of low appetite, or at its best

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<sup>11</sup> Ibid., p. 35



but chiefly the will and intent of the master, sub-headed with his conditioning experience, his sadness and ambitions and pleasures. The external factors would be...."<sup>12</sup>

"What we have wanted always is an unchangeable, and we have found that only a compass point, a thought, an individual ideal, does not change--Schiller and Goethe's Ideal to be worked out in terms of reality. And from such a thing as this, Beethoven writes a Ninth Symphony to Schiller's Ode to Joy."<sup>13</sup>

"To name a thing has always been to make it familiar and therefore a little less dangerous to us. 'Tree'

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a thing of gross sensation, and ready to sink from its best to the level of lust and harsh cruelty? A complete answer to the question would involve the writing of a history of morals that would set forth the conditions that have brought about contempt for the body, fear of the senses, and the opposition of flesh to spirit." (Ibid., p. 20)

18. 1. Cf. ante, notes to no. 3.

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<sup>12</sup> Ibid., pp. 36-37.

<sup>13</sup> Ibid., pp. 37-38.

1. The first part of the document is a list of names and addresses of the members of the committee.

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the abstract may harbor some evil in it until it has a name, but once having a name one can cope with it. A tree is not dangerous, but the forest is. Among primitives sometimes evil is escaped by never mentioning the name...Among others, as even among ourselves, the giving of a name establishes a familiarity which renders the thing impotent. It is interesting to see how some scientists and philosophers, who are an emotional and fearful group, are able to protect themselves against fear. In a modern scene, when the horizons stretch out and your philosopher is likely to fall off the world like a Dark Ages mariner, he can save himself by establishing a taboo-

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ii. "The connection of qualities with objects is intrinsic in all experience having significance. Eliminate this connection and nothing remains but a senseless and unidentifiable succession of transitory thrills." (Dewey, Art as Experience, p. 126)

19. 1. "Taking any individual object, we may call it, within its own boundaries, an interactive continuum. But it is always a continuum, so to speak, partial not complete. For no continuum of interactions of an individual thing is self-sustaining. It can sustain itself only by interacting with other interactive continua. Modes and patterns of organizations differ from one



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box which he may call 'mysticism' or 'supernaturalism' or 'radicalism.' Into this box he can throw all those thoughts which frighten him and thus be safe from them."<sup>14</sup>

"Perhaps the force of the great surf which beats on this shore has much to do with the tenacity of the animals here. It is noteworthy that ~~they~~ animals, rather than deserting such beaten shores for the safe cove and protected pools, simply increase their toughness and fight back at the sea with a kind of joyful survival. This ferocious survival quotient excites us and makes us feel good, and from the crawling, fighting, resisting qualities

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another, distinguishing kinds of things, and individuals or individual variations within each kind. But each kind and each individual within each kind interacts with other kinds of interactive continua." (Joseph Ratner, in Introduction to Intelligence in the Modern World, p. 147.)

ii. "However, even the billiard ball and the electron can be made significantly relevant to each other by including them in an environment sufficiently wide, and by making the interactive functions within that embrac-

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<sup>14</sup> Ibid., p. 54.



of the animals, it almost seems that they are excited too."<sup>15</sup>

"For we first, before our work, are products of our time."<sup>16</sup>

"There is a curious idea among scientific men that in scientific writing there is a common plateau of perfectionism. Nothing could be more untrue. The reports of biologists are the measure, not of the science, but of the men themselves....The same conditioning forces itself into specification as it does into any other kind of ob-

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ive society sufficiently narrow....it is by this double process of widening the environment and narrowing the range of interactivity that, scientifically, our solar system and Betelgeuse for example become connected minor histories within a larger history." (Ibid., pp. 161-62)

21. i. "When two interactive continua or two orders are beginning to interact, the new situation created by that initiation of interaction is a situation of conflict, disturbance, unsettlement--to use Dewey's terms. The

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<sup>15</sup> Ibid., p. 58.

<sup>16</sup> Ibid., p. 61.



servation, and the same faults of carelessness will be found in scientific reports as in the witness chair of a criminal court. It has seemed sometimes that the little men in scientific work assumed the awe-fullness of a priesthood to hide their deficiencies, as the witch-doctor does with his stilts and high masks, as the priesthods of all cults have, with secret or unfamiliar languages and symbols. It is usually found that only the little stuffy men object to what is called 'popularization,' by which they mean writing with a clarity understandable to one not familiar with the tricks and codes of the cult. We have not known a single great scientist who could not

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issue, the consequence, is the outcome of the interactivity and what it will be, in any genuine experimental situation, is problematic. Whether the outcome will be progressive or regressive, whether the funded consequence will be an increase or decrease with respect to the original 'investment' that went into the interactive situation is as the case may be. The history of change is 'progressive or evolutionary' even when it runs down hill. It is one of the great misfortunes of the term 'evolution' or 'evolutionary' that it became identified with an 'upward and onward' unidirectional meaning. Evolutionary development is evolutionary development irrespective of





discourse freely and interestingly with a child. Can it be that the haters of clarity have nothing to say, have observed nothing, have no clear picture of even their own fields? A dull man seems to be a dull man no matter what his field, and of course it is the right of a dull scientist to protect himself with feathers and robes, emblems and degrees, as do other dull men who are potentates and grand imperial rulers of lodges of dull men."<sup>17</sup>

"The pattern of a book, or a day, of a trip, becomes a characteristic design. The factors in a trip by boat, the many-formed personality phases all shuffled together,

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the direction in which it is heading." (Ibid., pp. 158-59.)

ii. "Perhaps the constantly increasing role of corporations in our economic life gives a clew to a fitting name. The word may be used in a wider sense than is conveyed by its technical legal meaning. We may then say that the United States has steadily moved from an earlier pioneer individualism to a condition of dominant corporateness. The influence business corporations exercise in determining present industrial and economic

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<sup>17</sup> Ibid., p. 73.



changing a little to fit into the box and yet bringing their own lumps and corners, makes the trip. And from all these factors your expedition has character of its own, so that one may say of it, 'That was a good, kind trip.' Or, 'That was a mean one.' The character of the whole becomes defined and definite.<sup>18</sup>

"...--a man looking at reality brings his own limitations to the world. If he has strength and energy of mind the tide pool stretches both ways, digs back to electrons and leaps space into the universe and fights out of the moment into non-conceptual time. Then ecology

activities is both a cause and a symbol of the tendency to combination in all phases of life. Associations tightly or loosely organized more and more define the opportunities, the choices and the actions of individuals. The need of the present is to apprehend the fact that, for better or worse, we are living in a corporate age."

(Dewey, "Individualism Old and New," cited in Intelligence in the Modern World, p. 407.)

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<sup>18</sup> Ibid., p. 84.



has a synonym which is ALL."<sup>19</sup>

"One considers the durations indicated in geology, in paleontology, and, thinking out of our time-world with its duration between time-stone and time-stone, says, 'What an incredible interval!' Then, when one struggles to build some picture of astro-physical time, he is faced with a light year, a thought-deranging duration unless the relativity of all things intervenes and time expands and contracts, matching itself relatively to the pulsings of a relative universe."<sup>20</sup>

iii. "Anthropologically speaking, we are living in a money culture. Our materialism, our devotion to money making and to having a good time, are not things by themselves. They are the product of the fact that we live in a money culture; of the fact that our technique and technology are controlled by interest in private profit." (Ibid., p. 405)

iv. "Oppositions of mind and body, soul and

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<sup>19</sup> Ibid., p. 85.

<sup>20</sup> Ibid., pp. 85-86.





"It is amazing how the strictures of the old teleologies infect our observation, causal thinking warped by hope. It was said earlier that hope is a diagnostic human trait, and this simple cortex symptom seems to be a prime factor in our inspection of our universe. For hope implies a change from a present bad condition to a future better one....And the feeders of hope, economic and religious, have from these simple strivings of dissatisfaction managed to create a world picture which is very hard to escape. Man grows toward perfection; animals grow toward man; bad grows toward good; and down toward up, until our little mechanism, hope, achieved in our-

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matter, spirit and flesh all have their origin, fundamentally, in fear of what life may bring forth. They are marks of contraction and withdrawal. Full recognition, therefore, of the continuity of the organs, needs and basic impulses of the human creature with his animal forbears, implies no necessary reduction of man to the level of the brutes. On the contrary, it makes possible the drawing of a ground-plan of human experience upon which is erected the superstructure of man's marvelous and distinguishing experience." (Dewey, Art As Experience, p. 22.)



selves probably to cushion the shock of thought, manages to warp our whole world. Probably when our species developed the trick of memory and with it the counterbalancing projection called 'the future,' this shock-absorber, hope, had to be included in the series, else the species would have destroyed itself in despair. For if ever any man were deeply and unconsciously sure that his future would be no better than his past, he might deeply wish to cease to live. And out of this therapeutic poultice we build our iron teleologies and twist the tide pools and the stars into the pattern. To most men the most hateful statement possible is, 'A thing is

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v. "To the being fully alive, the future is not ominous but a promise; it surrounds the present as a halo. It consists of possibilities that are felt as a possession of what is now and here. In life that is truly life, everything overlaps and merges. But all too often we exist in apprehensions of what the future may bring, and are divided within ourselves. Even when not overanxious, we do not enjoy the present because we subordinate it to that which is absent. Because of the frequency of this abandonment of the present to the past and future, the happy periods of an experience that is now complete because it absorbs into itself memories of the past and



because it is.' Even those who have managed to drop the leading-strings of a Sunday-school deity are still led by the unconscious teleology of their developed trick. And in saying that hope cushions the shock of experience, that one trait balances the directionalism of another, a teleology is implied, unless one know or feel or think we are here, and that without this balance, hope, our species in its blind mutation might have joined many, many others in extinction. Dr. Torsten Gislén...has shown that as often as not, in his studied group at least, mutations have had destructive, rather than survival value. Extending this thesis, it is interesting to think of the

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anticipations of the future, come to constitute an esthetic ideal. Only when the past ceases to trouble and anticipations of the future are not perturbing is a being wholly united with his environment and therefore fully alive." (Ibid., p. 18)

24. "Without going into elaborate details, a descriptive statement is a description of what is found. If you want to rest on your description you may do so. But the description is not an explanation. It is a denotation of what is to be explained. If it is a description of the explanation, a denotation of what is found at the end of an explanatory inquiry, then it is customary to





mutations of our own species. It is said and thought there has been none in historical times. We wonder, though, where in man a mutation might take place. Man is the only animal whose interest and whose drive are outside himself. Other animals may dig holes to live in; may weave nests or take possession of hollow trees. Some species, like bees or spiders, even create complicated homes, but they do it with the fluids and process of their own bodies. They make little impression on the world. But the world is furrowed and cut, torn and blasted by man. Its flora has been swept away and changed; its mountains torn down by man; its flat lands littered by

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call that the conclusion. The statement that opium puts to sleep is a description. To present that description as an explanation is to convert an effect directly into a cause which is equivalent to taking the same thing twice over, once as 'effect' and once as 'cause,' which is no gain at all except in confusion.

"A description denotes how things are found...

"There is of **course** a vast difference between an explanation of how things as a matter of fact are, and explanation of how they should be in order to meet certain desirable or desired specifications. But again, unless we believe in miracles...the knowledge of the



the debris of his living. And these changes have been wrought, not because any inherent technical ability has demanded them, but because his desire has created that technical ability. Physiological man does not require this paraphernalia to exist, but the whole man does. He is the only animal who lives outside himself, whose drive is in external things--property, houses, money, concepts of power. He lives in his cities and his factories, in his business and job and art. But having projected himself into these external complexities, he is them. His house, his automobile are a part of him and a large part of him.

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specifications desirable and the knowledge how to change things so they will fulfill the specifications are both consequences of learning first of all how things are.

".....

"The how and the should, within any intelligent undertaking, mark a difference, a distinction, not a separation. You can know that things should be different only as a consequence of knowing how they are." (Ratner, Introduction to Intelligence in the Modern World, pp. 130-32.)

28. 1. "'By the nature of the case, causality,



This is beautifully demonstrated by a thing doctors know-- that when a man loses his possessions a very common result is sexual impotence. If then the projection, the pre-occupation of man, lies in external things so that even his subjectivity is a mirror of houses and cars and grain elevators, the place to look for his mutation would be in the direction of his drive, or in other words in the external things he deals with. And here we can indeed readily find evidence of mutation. The industrial revolution would then be indeed a true mutation, and the present tendency toward collectivism, whether attributed to Marx or Hitler or Henry Ford, might be as definite a

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however it be defined, consists in the sequential order itself, and not in the last term which as such is irrelevant to causality, although it may, of course, be, in addition, an initial term in another sequential order.' The nature of the case Dewey here speaks about is the case of Nature. However we define causes and effects they are both within Nature and constitute the same historical series. To discriminate causes in Nature from effects in Nature is to introduce distinctions within a continuously moving history. It is not to cut Nature into two halves, the first half the causes, the second half the effects and nothing but the cut in between. Still





mutation of the species as the lengthening neck of the evolving giraffe. For it must be that mutations take place in the direction of a species drive or preoccupation. If then this tendency toward collectivization is mutation there is no reason to suppose it is for the better. It is a rule in paleontology that ornamentation and complication precede extinction. And our mutation, of which the assembly line, the collective farm, the mechanized army, and the mass production of food are evidences or even symptoms, might well correspond to the thickening armor of the great reptiles--a tendency that can only end in extinction. If this should happen to be true, nothing

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less is it to isolate one event, and set it up as the aboriginal beginning or the ultimate ending, as the 'metaphysically primitive' mechanical or teleological 'cause' of all. 'The view held--or implied--by some mechanists, which treats an initial term as if it had an inherent generative force which it somehow emits and bestows upon its successors, is all of a piece with the view held by teleologists which implies that an end brings about its own antecedents. Both isolate an event from the history in which it belongs and in which it has character. Both make a factitiously isolated position in a temporal order a mark of true reality, one theory



stemming from thought can interfere with it or bend it. Conscious thought seems to have little effect on the action or direction of our species. There is a war now which no one wants to fight, in which no one can see a gain--a zombie war of sleep-walkers which nevertheless goes on out of all control of intelligence. Some time ago a Congress of honest men refused an appropriation of several hundreds of millions of dollars to feed our people. They said, and meant it, that the economic structure of the country would collapse under the pressure of such expenditure. And now the same men, just as honestly, are devoting many billions to the manufacture,

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selecting initial place and the other final place. But in fact causality is another name for the sequential order itself; and since this is an order of a history having a beginning and end, there is nothing more absurd than setting causality over against either initiation or finality." (Ibid., pp. 151-52)

ii. "Nature is an inclusive history of multitudinous ongoing histories, the comprehensive interactive continuum consequent upon the interactivities of an infinite number of interactive continua of an indefinite number of general kinds." (Loc. cit.)



transportation and detonation of explosives to protect the people they would not feed. And it must go on. Perhaps it is all a part of the process of mutation and perhaps the mutation will see us done for. We have made our mark on the world, but we have really done nothing that the trees and the creeping plants, ice and erosion, cannot remove in a fairly short time. And it is strange and sad and again symptomatic that most people, reading this speculation which is only speculation, will that it is a treason to our species so to speculate. For in spite of overwhelming evidence to the contrary, the trait of hope still controls the future, and man, not a species,

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29. "But 'relation' in its idiomatic usage denotes something direct and energetic. It fixes attention upon the way things bear upon one another, their clashes and unitings, the way they fulfill and frustrate, promote and retard, excite and inhibit one another." (Dewey, Art as Experience, p. 134)

33. "A first-rate test of the value of any philosophy which is offered us is this: Does it end in conclusions which, when they are referred back to ordinary life-experiences and their predicaments, render them more significant, more luminous to us, and make our dealings with them more fruitful? Or does it terminate in render-





but a triumphant race, will approach perfection, and, finally, tearing himself free, will march up the stars and take his place where, because of his power and virtue, he belongs: on the right hand of the  $\sqrt{-1}$ . From which majestic seat he will direct with pure intelligence the ordering of the universe. And perhaps when that occurs--when our species progresses toward extinction or marches into the forehead of God--there will be certain degenerate groups left behind, say, the Indians of Lower California, in the shadows of the rocks or sitting motionless in dugout canoes. They may remain to sun themselves, to eat

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ing the things of ordinary experience more opaque than they were before, and in depriving them of having in 'reality' even the significance they had previously seemed to have? Does it yield the enrichment and increase of power of ordinary things which the results of physical science afford when applied in every-day affairs? Or does it become a mystery that these ordinary things should be what they are, or indeed that they should be at all, while philosophic concepts are left to dwell in separation in some technical realm of their own? It is the fact that so many philosophies terminate in conclusions that make it necessary to disparage and condemn primary experience,



and starve and sleep and reproduce. Now they have many legends....Perhaps then they will have another concerning a great and godlike race that flew away in four-motored bombers to the accompaniment of exploding bombs, the voice of God calling them home."<sup>21</sup>

"And then we thought of what they are, and we are-- products of disease and sorrow and hunger and alcoholism. And suppose some all-powerful mind and will should cure our species so that for a number of generations we would be healthy and happy? We are the products of our disease and suffering. These are factors as powerful as other

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leading those who hold them to measure the sublimity of their 'realities' as philosophically defined by remoteness from the concerns of daily life, which leads cultivated common sense to look askance at philosophy." (Dewey, Process and Reality, p. 25, quoted by Ratner, Introduction, Intelligence in the Modern World, pp. 228-29, italics are Ratner's.)

35. "It [traditional philosophy] bequeathed the notion, which has ruled philosophy ever since the time of the Greeks, that the office of knowledge is to uncover

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<sup>21</sup> Ibid., pp. 86-89.



genetic factors. To cure and feed would be to change the species, and the result would be another animal entirely. We wonder if we would be able to tolerate our own species without a history of syphilis and tuberculosis. We don't know.

"Certain communicants of the neurological conditioning religions practised by cowardly people who, by narrowing their emotional experience, hope to broaden their lives, lead us to think we would not like this new species. These religionists, being afraid ~~of~~ not only of pain and sorrow but even of joy, can so protect themselves that they seem

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the antecedently real, rather than, as is the case with our practical judgements, to gain the kind of understanding which is necessary to deal with problems as they arise." (Dewey, Intelligence in the Modern World, p.288.)

39. 1. "The Nature within which we live is an ongoing history of ongoing histories. When an event is connected with another event as cause-effect, that connection is the exemplification of the continuity between them. But that connection of continuity is the funded consequence, the terminal phase of the inclusive history of cause-effect. 'The two principles of continuity and interaction are not separate from each other. They inter-





dead to us. The new animal resulting from purification of the species might be one we wouldn't like at all. For it is through struggle and sorrow that people are able to participate in one another--the heartlessness of the healthy, well-fed, and un-sorrowful person has in it an infinite smugness."<sup>22</sup>

Non-teleological thinking. "...we thought that through inspection of thinking technique a kind of purity of approach might be consciously achieved--that non-teleological or 'is' thinking might be substituted in part for the usual cause-effect methods."<sup>23</sup>

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cept and unite. They are, so to speak, the longitudinal and lateral aspects' [quoted from Dewey, Experience and Education] of every history, of every situation, of every sequential order, of every connection of cause-effect." (Ratner, Introduction, Intelligence in the Modern World, p. 153.)

ii. Cf. no. 28,ii.

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<sup>22</sup> Ibid., pp. 117-118.

<sup>23</sup> Ibid., pp. 131-132.

The first part of the paper discusses the importance of the study and the objectives of the research. It then proceeds to a literature review, followed by a description of the methodology used in the study. The results of the study are presented in the next section, followed by a discussion of the findings and their implications. The paper concludes with a summary of the main points and a list of references.

The study was conducted in a laboratory setting, and the results were compared with those of previous studies. The findings of the study are consistent with those of previous studies, and they provide new insights into the phenomenon being studied. The implications of the study are discussed in detail, and the authors conclude that the study has contributed to the understanding of the phenomenon being studied.

The authors would like to thank the following people for their assistance in the study: [names]. The study was supported by the following grants: [grant numbers].

"In their sometimes intolerant refusal to face facts as they are, teleological notions may substitute a fierce but ineffectual attempt to change conditions which are assumed to be undesirable, in place of the understanding-acceptance which would pave the way for a more sensible attempt at any change which might still be indicated.

"Non-teleological ideas derive through 'is' thinking, associated with natural selection as Darwin seems to have understood it. They imply depth, fundamentalism, and clarity--seeing beyond traditional or personal pro-

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40. "The near explains the far. The drop is the small ocean. A man is related to all nature. This perception of the worth of the vulgar is fruitful in discoveries." (Ralph Waldo Emerson, "The American Scholar," Frederick I. Carpenter, Ralph Waldo Emerson, p. 68.)

43. "In the process of creation of the new society, the members are changed, both as to their own individual boundaries and the 'personal order' of each. The boundaries of the new society, or the new interactive continuum are vastly different from the boundaries of each of



jections. They consider events as outgrowths and expressions rather than as results; conscious acceptance as a desideratum, and certainly as an all-important prerequisite. Non-teleological thinking concerns itself primarily not with what should be, or could be, or might be, but rather with what actually 'is'--attempting at most to answer the already sufficiently difficult questions what or how, instead of why."<sup>24</sup>

"An interesting parallel to these two types of thinking is afforded by the microcosm with its freedom or indeterminacy, as contrasted with the morphologically

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the members as constituent and interactive within the new society. The new society taking it as a totality has its 'personal order,' its 'causal law' its pervasive qualitative unity." (Ratner, Introduction, Intelligence in the Modern World, pp. 155-56.)

44. "Knowledge has nothing to do with knowledge-getting; knowing has nothing to do with the process of coming to know. Knowing is the contemplation of the object of knowledge. And contemplation is all the know-

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<sup>24</sup> Ibid., p. 135.





inviolable pattern of the macrocosm. Statistically, the electron is free to go where it will. But the destiny pattern of any aggregate, comprising uncountable billions of these same units, is fixed and certain, however much that inevitability may be slowed down. The eventual disintegration ~~of~~ a stick of wood or a piece of iron through the departure of the presumably immortal electrons is assured, even though it may be delayed by such protection against the operation of the second law of thermodynamics as is afforded by painting and rustproofing."<sup>25</sup>

"In the non-teleological sense there can be no

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ledge thereof." (Ibid., pp. 112-13.)

45. "After democratic political institutions were nominally established, beliefs and ways of looking at life and of acting that originated when men and women were externally controlled and subjected to arbitrary power, persisted in the family, the church, business and the school, and experience shows that as long as they persist there, political democracy is not secure."

(Dewey, from "Democracy and Educational Administration,"

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<sup>25</sup> Loc. cit.



'answer.' There can be only pictures which become larger and more significant as one's horizon increases."<sup>26</sup>

"Understandings of this sort can be reduced to this deep and significant summary: 'It's so because it's so.' But exactly the same words can also express the hasty or superficial attitude. There seems to be no explicit method for differentiating the deep and participating understanding, the 'all-truth' which admits infinite change or expansion as added relations become apparent, from the shallow dismissal and implied lack of further interest which may be couched in the very same words."<sup>27</sup>

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School and Society, Intelligence in the Modern World,  
pp. 402-03.)

46. Cf. ante, no. 5

47. Cf. ante., no. 28.

48. Cf. no. 2.

49. Cf. no. 28, 1.

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<sup>26</sup> Ibid., p. 136.

<sup>27</sup> Ibid., p. 137.

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"Usually it seems to be true that when even the most definitely apparent cause-effect situations are examined in the light of wider knowledge, the cause-effect aspect comes to be seen as less rather than more significant, and the statistical or relational aspects acquire larger meaning. It seems safe to assume that non-teleological is more 'ultimate' than teleological reasoning. Hence the latter would be expected to prove to be limited and constricting except when used provisionally. But while it is true that the former is more open, for that very reason its employment necessitates greater discipline and care in order to allow for the dangers of looseness

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50. 1. "The personal order, causal law, pervasive qualitative unity of any new society is not the arithmetical sum of the orders, laws or qualitative unities of the constitutive interactive members as they were before the emergence of the new society. Every interactive continuum or individual thing is a qualitative whole of qualitative interactions. There are quantities of qualities in Nature but nothing in Nature has the quality of a sheer quantity. The consequence of interactivity of two qualitative unities is a qualitative transformation. If qualitative transformation is not the consequence, then no interaction has taken place.





and inadequate control."<sup>28</sup>

"More justly, the relational picture should be regarded only as a glimpse--a challenge to consider also the rest of the relations as they are available--to envision the whole picture as well as can be done with given abilities and data."<sup>29</sup>

"But the greatest fallacy in, or rather the greatest objection to, teleological thinking is in connection with the emotional content, the belief. People get to believing and even to professing the apparent answers thus arrived at, suffering mental constrictions by emotionally

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"The constitutive interactive members within a society are never without their own individual orders, causal laws, or qualitative unities. If within a 'society' there are no individual differences within the constitutive, interactive members, then you have no members and no society at all." (Ratner, Introduction, Intelligence in the Modern World, p. 156.)

ii. Cf. ante. no. 43,

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<sup>28</sup> Ibid., p. 141.

<sup>29</sup> Ibid., p. 142.



closing their minds to any of the further and possibly opposite 'answers' which might otherwise be unearthed by honest effort--answers which, if faced realistically, would give rise to a struggle and to a possible rebirth which might place the whole problem in a new and more significant light."<sup>30</sup>

"Significant in this connection is the fact that conflicts may arise between any two or more of the 'answers' brought forth by either of the teleologies themselves. But there can be no conflict between any of these and the non-teleological picture."<sup>31</sup>

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51. "Wherever there is interaction there also is continuity. The interaction is the continuity taken laterally or cross-sectionally; the continuity is the interaction taken longitudinally or historically. The maintenance of the interception and union of continuity and interaction constitute or create an interactive continuum." (Ratner, Introduction, Intelligence in the Modern World, p. 154.)

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<sup>30</sup> Ibid., p. 143.

<sup>31</sup> Loc. cit.

The first part of the paper is devoted to a discussion of the general principles of the theory of the structure of the atom. It is shown that the structure of the atom is determined by the laws of quantum mechanics, which are based on the principle of the uncertainty of the position and momentum of the particles. The structure of the atom is therefore not a simple one, but a complex one, which is determined by the laws of quantum mechanics.

The second part of the paper is devoted to a discussion of the general principles of the theory of the structure of the molecule. It is shown that the structure of the molecule is determined by the laws of quantum mechanics, which are based on the principle of the uncertainty of the position and momentum of the particles. The structure of the molecule is therefore not a simple one, but a complex one, which is determined by the laws of quantum mechanics.

The third part of the paper is devoted to a discussion of the general principles of the theory of the structure of the crystal. It is shown that the structure of the crystal is determined by the laws of quantum mechanics, which are based on the principle of the uncertainty of the position and momentum of the particles. The structure of the crystal is therefore not a simple one, but a complex one, which is determined by the laws of quantum mechanics.

The fourth part of the paper is devoted to a discussion of the general principles of the theory of the structure of the liquid. It is shown that the structure of the liquid is determined by the laws of quantum mechanics, which are based on the principle of the uncertainty of the position and momentum of the particles. The structure of the liquid is therefore not a simple one, but a complex one, which is determined by the laws of quantum mechanics.

"But there can be no conflict between any or all of these factors and the non-teleological picture, because the latter includes them--evaluates them relationally or at least attempts to do so, or maybe only accepts them as time-place truths. Teleological 'answers' necessarily must be included in the non-teleological method--since they are part of the picture even if only restrictedly true--and as soon as their qualities of relatedness are recognized. Even erroneous beliefs are real things, and have to be considered proportional to their spread or intensity. 'All-truth' must embrace all extant apropos errors also, and know them as such by relation to the whole, and allow for their effects."<sup>32</sup>

"The criterion of validity in the handling of data seems to be this: that the summary shall say in substance, significantly and understandingly, 'It's so because it's so.' Unfortunately the very same words might equally derive through a most superficial glance....But to know a thing emergently and significantly is something else again, even though the understanding may be expressed in the self-same words that were used superficially."<sup>33</sup>

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<sup>32</sup> Ibid., p. 144.

<sup>33</sup> Loc. cit.





"However, many people are unwilling to chance the sometimes ruthless-appearing notions which may arise through non-teleological treatments. They fear even to use them in that they may be left dangling out in space, deprived of such emotional support as had been afforded them by an unthinking belief in the...institutions of tradition; of religion; science; in the security of the home or the family; or in a comfortable bank account. But for that matter emancipations in general are likely to be held in terror by those who may not have achieved them, but whose thresholds in those respects are becoming significantly low."<sup>34</sup>

"Non-teleological methods more than any other seem capable of great tenderness, of an all-embracingness which is rare otherwise. Consider, for instance, the fact that, once a given situation is deeply understood, no apologies are required. There are ample difficulties even to understanding conditions 'as is.' Once that has been accomplished, the 'why' of it (known now to be simply a relation, though probably a near and important one) seems no longer to be preponderantly important. It needn't be condoned or extenuated, it just 'is.' It is

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<sup>34</sup> Ibid., p. 145.



seen merely as a part of a more or less dim whole picture."<sup>35</sup>

"But with the non-teleological treatment there is only the love and understanding of instant acceptance..."<sup>36</sup>

"Strictly, the term non-teleological thinking ought not to be applied to what we have in mind. Because it involves more than thinking, that term is inadequate. Modus operandi might be better--a method of handling data of any sort....The method extends beyond thinking even to living itself; in fact, by inferred definition it transcends the realm of thinking possibilities, it postulates 'living into.'"<sup>37</sup>

"The factors we have been considering as 'answers' seem to be merely symbols or indices, relational aspects of things--of which they are integral parts--not to be considered in terms of causes and effects. The truest reason, more valid and clearer than all the other separate reasons, or than any group of them short of the whole. Anything less than the whole forms part of the picture

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<sup>35</sup> Ibid., p. 146.

<sup>36</sup> Ibid., p. 147.

<sup>37</sup> Loc. cit.



only, and the infinite whole is unknowable except by being it, by living into it."<sup>38</sup>

"The separate reasons, no matter how valid, are only fragmentary parts of the picture. And the whole necessarily includes all that it impinges on as object and subject, in ripples fading with distance or depending upon the original intensity of the vortex."<sup>39</sup>

"The frequent allusions to an underlying pattern have no implication of mysticism--except inasmuch as a pattern which comprises infinity in factors and symbols might be called mystic. But infinity as here used occurs also in the mathematical aspects of physiology and physics, both far away from mysticism as the term is ordinarily employed. Actually, the underlying pattern is probably nothing more than an integration of just such symbols and indices and mutual reference points as are already known, except that its power is n. Such an integration might include nothing more spectacular than we already know. But, equally, it could include anything, even events and entities as different from those already known as the vectors, tensors, scalars, and ideas of electrical charges

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<sup>38</sup> Ibid., p. 148.

<sup>39</sup> Ibid., p. 149.





in mathematical physics are different from the mechanical model world of the Victorian scientists.

"In such a pattern, causality would be merely a name for something that exists only in our partial and biased mental reconstructings. The pattern which it indexes, however, would be real, but not intellectually apperceivable because the pattern goes everywhere and is everything and cannot be encompassed by finite mind or by anything short of life--which it is.

"The psychic or spiritual residua remaining after the most careful physical analysis, or the physical remnants obvious, particularly to us of the twentieth century, in the most honest and disciplined spiritual speculations of medieval philosophers, all bespeak such a pattern. Those residua, those most minute differentials, the 0.001 percentages which suffice to maintain the races of sea animals, are seen finally to be the most important things in the world, not because of their sizes, but because they are everywhere. The differential is the true universal, the true catalyst, the cosmic solvent. Any investigation carried far enough will bring to light these residua, or rather will leave them still unassailable as Emerson remarked a hundred years ago in 'The Oversoul'--will run into the brick wall of the impossibility of perfection while at the same time insisting on the valid-



ity of perfection. Anomalies especially testify to that framework; they are the commonest intellectual vehicles for breaking through; all are solvable in the sense that any one is understandable, but that one leads with the power n to still more and deeper anomalies.

"This deep and underlying pattern inferred by non-teleological thinking crops up everywhere--a relational thing, surely, relating opposing factors on different levels, as reality and potential are related. But it must not be considered as causative, it simply exists, it is, things are merely expressions of it as it is expressions of them. And they are it, also. As Swinburne, extolling Hertha, the earth goddess, makes her say: 'Man, equal and one with me, man that is made of me, man that is I,' so all things which are that--which is all--equally may be extolled. That pattern materializes everywhere in the sense that Eddington finds the non-integer q 'number' appearing everywhere, in the background of all fundamental equations [The Nature of the Physical World, pp. 208-10.] , in the sense that the speed of light, constant despite compoundings or subtractions, seemed at one time almost to be conspiring against investigation.

"The whole is necessarily everything, the whole world of fact and fancy, body and psyche, physical fact and spiritual truth, individual and collective, life and



death, macrocosm and microcosm (the greatest quanta here, the greatest synapse between these two), conscious and unconscious, subject and object. The whole picture is portrayed by is, the deepest word of deep ultimate reality, not shallow or partial as reasons are, but deeper and participating, possibly encompassing the Oriental concept of being."<sup>40</sup>

"It seemed to us that life in every form is incipiently everywhere waiting for a chance to take root and start reproducing; eggs, spores, seeds, bacilli--everywhere. Let a raindrop fall and it is crowded with the waiting life."<sup>41</sup>

"Seeing a school of fish lying quietly in still water, all the heads pointing in one direction, one says, 'It is unusual that this is so'--but it isn't unusual at all. We begin at the wrong end. They simply lie that way, and it is remarkable only because with our blunt tool we cannot carve out a human reason. Everything is potentially everywhere--the body is potentially cancerous, phthisic, strong to resist or weak to receive. In one swing of the balance the waiting life pounces in and takes

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<sup>40</sup> Ibid., pp. 149-51.

<sup>41</sup> Ibid., p. 164.





possession and grows strong while our individual chemistry is distorted past the point where it can maintain its balance. This we call dying, and by the process we do not give nor offer but are taken by a multiform life and used for its proliferation. These things are balanced. A man is potentially all things too, greedy and cruel, capable of great love or great hatred, of balanced or unbalanced so-called emotions. This is the way he is--one factor in a surge of striving. And he continues to ask 'why' without first admitting to himself his cosmic identity."<sup>42</sup>

"There are colonies of pelagic tunicates which have taken a shape like the finger of a glove. Each member of the colony is an individual animal, but the colony is another individual animal, not at all like the sum of its individuals. Some of the colonists, girdling the open end, have developed the ability, one against the other, of making a pulsing movement very like muscular action. Others of the colonists collect the food and distribute it, and the outside of the glove is hardened and protected against contact. Here are two animals, and yet the same thing....So when a man of individualistic reason, if he must ask, 'Which is the animal, the colony or the indi-

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<sup>42</sup> Ibid., 164-65.



vidual?' must abandon his particular kind of reason and say, 'Why it's two animals and they aren't alike any more than the cells of my body are like me. I am much more than the sum of my cells and, for all I know, they are much more than the division of me.' There is no quietism in such acceptance, but rather the basis for a far deeper understanding of us and our world."<sup>43</sup>

"It is not enough to say that we cannot know or judge because all the information is not in. The process of gathering knowledge does not lead to knowing. A child's world spreads only a little beyond his understanding while that of a great scientist thrusts outward immeasurably. An answer is invariably the parent of a great family of new questions. So we draw worlds and fit them like tracings against the world about us, and crumple them when they do not fit and draw new ones."<sup>44</sup>

"When a hypothesis is deeply accepted it becomes a growth which only a kind of surgery can amputate. Thus, beliefs persist long after their factual bases have been removed, and practises based on beliefs are often carried

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<sup>43</sup> Ibid. p. 165.

<sup>44</sup> Ibid., pp. 165-66.



on even when the beliefs which stimulated them have been forgotten. The practice must follow the belief. It is often considered, particularly by reformers and legislators, that law is a stimulant to action or an inhibitor of action, when actually the reverse is true. Successful law is simply the publication of the practice of the majority of units of a society, and by it the inevitable units are either driven to conform or are eliminated."<sup>45</sup>

"There are three ways of seeing animals: dead and preserved; in their own habitats for the short time of a low tide; and for long periods in an aquarium. The ideal is all three."<sup>46</sup>

"Indeed, as one watches the little animals, definite words describing them are likely to grow hazy and less definite, and as species merges into species, the whole idea of definite independent species begins to waver, and a scale-like concept of animal variations comes to take its place."<sup>47</sup>

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<sup>45</sup> Ibid., pp. 180-81.

<sup>46</sup> Ibid., p. 189.

<sup>47</sup> Ibid., p. 207.





"A number of times we were asked, Why do you do this thing, this picking up and pickling of little animals? To our own people we could have said any one of a number of meaningless things, which by sanction have been accepted as meaningful. We could have said, 'We wish to fill in certain gaps in the knowledge of the Gulf fauna.' That would have satisfied our people, for knowledge is a sacred thing, not to be questioned or even inspected. But the Indian might say, 'What good is this knowledge? Since you make a duty of it, what is its purpose?' We could have told our people the usual thing about the advancement of science, and again we would not have been questioned further. But the Indian might ask, 'Is it advancing, and toward what? Or is it merely becoming complicated? You save the lives of children for a world that does not love them. It is our practice,' the Indian might say, 'to build a house before we move into it. We would not want a child to escape pneumonia, only to be hurt all its life.' The lies we tell about our duty and our purposes, the meaningless words of science and philosophy, are walls that topple before a bewildered little 'why.' Finally, we learned to know why we did these things. The animals were very beautiful. Here was life from which we borrowed life and excitement. In other words, we did these things



because it was pleasant to do them."<sup>48</sup>

"Our own interest lay in the relationships of animal to animal. If one observes in this relational sense, it seems apparent that species are only commas in a sentence, that each species is at once the point and the base of a pyramid, that all life is relational to the point where an Einsteinian relativity seems to emerge. And then not only the meaning but the feeling about species grows misty. One merges into another, groups melt into ecological groups until the time when what we know as life meets and enters what we think of as non-life: barnacle and rock, rock and earth, earth and tree, tree and rain and air. And the units nestle into the whole and are inseparable from it. Then one can come back to the microscope and the tide pool and the aquarium. But the little animals are found to be changed, no longer set apart and alone. And it is a strange thing that most of the feeling we call religious, most of the mystical outcrying which is one of the most prized and used and desired reactions of our species, is really the understanding and the attempt to say that man is related to the whole thing, related inextricably to all reality, known and unknowable. This is a

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<sup>48</sup> Ibid., p. 209.



a simple thing to say, but the profound feeling of it made a Jesus, a St. Augustine, a St. Francis, a Roger Bacon, a Charles Darwin, and an Einstein. Each of them in his own tempo and with his own voice discovered and reaffirmed with astonishment the knowledge that all things are one thing and that one thing is all things--plankton, a shimmering phosphorescence on the sea and the spinning planets and an expanding universe, all bound together by the elastic string of time. It is advisable to look from the tide pool to the stars and then back to the tide pool again."<sup>49</sup>

"The schools swam, marshaled and patrolled. They turned as a unit and dived as a unit. In their millions they followed a pattern minute as to direction and depth and speed. There must be some fallacy in our thinking of these fish as individuals. Their functions in the school are in some as yet unknown way as controlled as though the school were one unit. We cannot conceive of this intricacy until we are able to think of the school as an animal itself, reacting with all its cells to stimuli which perhaps might not influence one fish at all. And this larger animal, the school, seems to have a nature and

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<sup>49</sup> Ibid., pp. 216-17.





drive and ends of its own. It is more than and different from the sum of its units. If we can think in this way, it will not seem so unbelievable that every fish heads in the same direction, that the water interval between fish and fish is identical with all the units, and that it seems to be directed by a school intelligence. If it is a unit animal itself, why should it not so react?

Perhaps this is the wildest of speculations, but we rather suspect that when the school is studied as an animal rather than as the sum of unit fish, it will be found that certain units are assigned special functions to perform; that weaker or slower units may even take their places as placating food for the predators for the sake of the security of the school as an animal. In the little Bay of San Carlos, where there were many schools of a number of species, there was even a feeling (and 'feeling' is used advisedly) of a larger unit which was the interrelation of species with their interdependence for food, even though that food be each other. A smoothly working larger animal surviving within itself--larval shrimp to little fish to larger fish to giant fish--one operating mechanism. And perhaps this unit of survival may key into the larger animal which is the life of all the sea, and this into the larger of the world. There would seem to be only one commandment for living things: Survive! And the forms



and species and units and groups are armed for survival... intelligent for it. This commandment decrees the death and destruction of myriads of individuals for the survival of the whole. Life has one final end, to be alive; and all the tricks and mechanisms, all the successes and all the failures, are aimed at that end."<sup>50</sup>

"And in a unified-field hypothesis, or in life, which is a unified field of reality, everything is an index of everything else. And the truth of mind and the way mind is must be an index of things, the way things are, however much one may stand against the other as an index of the second or irregular order, rather than as a harmonic or first-order index. These two types of indices may be compared to the two types of waves, for indices are symbols as primitive as waves. The first wave-type is the regular or cosine wave, such as tide or undulations of light or sound or other energy, especially where the output is steady and unmixed. These waves may be progressive--increasing or diminishing--or they can seem to be stationary, although deeply some change or progression may be found in all oscillation. All the terms of a series must be influenced by the torsion of the

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<sup>50</sup> Ibid., pp. 240-41.



first term and by the torsion of the end, or change, or stoppage of the series. Such waves as these may be predictable as the tide is. The second type, the irregular for the while, such as graphs of rainfalls in a given region, fall into means which are the functions of the length of time during which observations have been made. These are unpredictable individually; that is, one cannot say that it will rain or not rain tomorrow, but in ten years one can predict a certain amount of rainfall and the season of it. And to this secondary type mind might be close by hinge and 'key-in' indices."<sup>51</sup>

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<sup>51</sup> Ibid., p. 257.





## CHAPTER FIVE

### JOHN STEINBECK: SYMBOLIC REALIST

One who wishes to refresh himself by contact with the bone and sinew of society must avoid what is called the respectable portion of his city or neighborhood with as much care as in Europe a good traveller avoids American and English people.

Emerson, in his Journals<sup>1</sup>

The artistic perspective of John Steinbeck. John Steinbeck's philosophy is an integration of Emerson, Whitman and modern pragmatism. His approach to the study of life is disciplined and scientific. It is an observation focused on the relational aspects of life: all life is relational, man is related inextricably to all reality. This is a conception of the corporate whole of the human species. Humanity, itself, is a unit, complete and integrated, with its own drives, functions and aims.

Steinbeck's focus is upon the forces causative to certain groups being on the periphery of society. These groups take the blame from society for being socially undesirable because of their inability to integrate themselves with society, and are, at the same time, under attack by forces antagonistic to the existence of that

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<sup>1</sup> American Life in Letters, Jay B. Hubbell, ed., (New York: Harper & Brothers, 1936), I, 463.



society. Steinbeck's concern is for the pressures that engender these forces. He is constantly involved in the psychological problem of the corporate whole.

In any consideration of the manifestations of human nature, it is the psychological relationships that demand the deepest inquiry. Psychological realities are as 'real' as physical realities. In examining society Steinbeck views it through the individual members who make up the organic form of society. His examination is of the psychology of the individual, but it is not a sociological examination. Further, it is an examination with no overtones of judgement; it is an examination of complete objectivity; it is an examination with no attitude of placing a moral right or wrong.

In any examination the philosophy of the examiner determines that which he seeks. Steinbeck's philosophy has already been dealt with at great length. It is important for any critic of Steinbeck to be completely aware of his philosophy of phyletic humanism and his non-teleological thinking. Teleological thinking is based on a premise that everything has a purpose, that everything was created, or exists, so that something else might exist. It is a type of purposive thinking that Western civilization has been exposed to for several thousand years, and is so much a part of our cultural Zeitgeist

the first of these is the fact that the  
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that too many of us are unaware of its effect upon our thinking.

As Susanne K. Langer points out, "A question is really an ambiguous proposition; the answer is its determination."<sup>2</sup> She further develops the thought that:

A philosophy is characterized more by the formulation of its problems than by its solution of them. Its answers establish an edifice of facts; but its questions make the frame in which its picture is plotted. They make more than the frame; they give the angle of perspective, the palette, the style in which the picture is drawn--everything except the subject. In our questions lie our principles of analysis, and our answers may express whatever those principles are able to yield.<sup>3</sup>

It may be seen from this that through an examination of the critic's evaluation, the philosophy of the critic is revealed. This in turn enables one to determine the artistic standards used by the critic as a basis for his evaluation. A definite philosophic perspective on the part of the critic, if unrecognized, may set up a blockage so great that the critic will be psychologically unable to evaluate without bias.

Thus it becomes important for the critic to realize that his own philosophic perspective may be more a hindrance to him than an aid. The "willing suspension of

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<sup>2</sup> Philosophy in a New Key, (Cambridge: Harvard University Press, 1942), p. 4.

<sup>3</sup> Loc. cit.





disbelief" that Coleridge called for is more than applicable here. It should be a suspension of the critics' own philosophic perspective in that he makes no judgement, with his philosophy as a base of values, until after he has completely examined the work in question.<sup>4</sup>

Our critics have so greatly been conditioned to think teleologically that it takes almost a psychological reorganization to avoid balking at a consideration of non-teleological thinking. Yet it is non-teleological thinking that is the main undercurrent in Steinbeck's works.

Since this thinking is non-moralistic, since it has no concern for placing a blame, those critics who had classified Steinbeck's Grapes of Wrath as solely an indictment against a depression society seem to be without a valid basis for their judgement. Grapes of Wrath deals with a sociological topic only inasmuch as any representation of the state of human affairs is sociological. It is an indictment only as much as any representation of the state of human affairs is an indictment. Statistics released by the Department of Labor in the years 1932-37 are more damning an indictment against American economics than anything John Steinbeck ever wrote.

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<sup>4</sup> Cf. post, Chaps. Eight and Nine.



Any use of language that stimulates in others a realization of the significance of life is called literature, which is an art-form.

What then is the difference between facts issued in the form of a table by the Department of Labor, or the Department of Agriculture, and the same facts presented by Steinbeck in Grapes of Wrath, In Dubious Battle, and in Of Mice and Men? Steinbeck has concerned himself with the people these facts are about. It is the difference between a fact and a work of art. As Alfred North Whitehead states: "Thus 'art'...is any selection by which the concrete facts are so arranged as to elicit attention to particular values which are realizable by them."<sup>5</sup>

John Steinbeck: symbolic experientialist. By themselves these elements of experience, which are the 'facts' that John Steinbeck deals with, are valueless. One man hungering in Oklahoma is a fact, is a thing that exists, is a state of affairs. The oranges growing plump and ripe on the trees in California are a fact, are things that exist, are a state of affairs. And, when the man who owns the orange groves comes into relationship with the

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<sup>5</sup> Science and the Modern World, 16th edition, (New York: The Macmillan Company, 1947), p. 287.



hungering Oklahoman, no matter how tangential is this relationship, then a value is created. For it is only in their human relationships that elements of experience, of life, are important.<sup>6</sup>

The oranges are of no human value in themselves. It is what they represent that is important. They are symbols of one man's wealth, another man's method for appeasing his hunger, and for the antagonism between the two men. As symbols they are important.<sup>7</sup> All of Steinbeck's novels are symbolic interpretations of the elemental qualities in human experience.

There are two kinds of organic symbolism: specific, and developmental. The oranges, in the above paragraph, stand for a specific symbol. By developmental symbolism (functional symbolism) is meant the emergence of a symbol as a work progresses, so that its elements are many and that only in the integration of all the varied elements is the unity of the symbolism realized. Both of these forms of symbolism may be found in Steinbeck's works.

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<sup>6</sup> Cf. ante., Chap. Three, Art and Experience.

<sup>7</sup> "Symbols...are not proxy for their objects but are vehicles for the conception of objects." Langer, op. cit., pp. 60-61. Cf., also, Wallas, op. cit., p. 121: "Baudelaire says: 'In certain states of the soul the profound significance of life is revealed completely in the spectacle, however commonplace, that is before one's eyes; it becomes the symbol of this significance.'"





The form of the symbolism used by an author is indicative of the degree of his sensitivity, the areas to which he is sensitive, and of the influence of his philosophic perspective.

In the case of John Steinbeck, one must realize that while there is a different organic form in each of his novels, the symbolism he uses concerns itself always with the same subject--"the infinitude of the private man."<sup>8</sup> The "private man" is not the same "private man" of Emerson's journal. Steinbeck's Mack, Doc, Hazel,<sup>9</sup> George,<sup>10</sup> Danny, The Pirate,<sup>11</sup> and Tom Joad and Casy<sup>12</sup> are the private men he writes of so understandingly (and who are all symbols).

First, they are all individuals. They are self-reliant, independent. They are likeable, lovable in many ways. In a normal society, these men, integrated with that society would have been its leaders and would have contributed their strength to that society. Of all things these men possess in common, the one great quality is that

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<sup>8</sup> Emerson, Journals, op. cit., I, 463.

<sup>9</sup> Cf. Cannery Row.

<sup>10</sup> Cf. Of Mice and Men.

<sup>11</sup> Cf. Tortilla Flat

<sup>12</sup> Cf. Grapes of Wrath.



of strength: strength of will, character, mind, and only in the case of one or two, strength of body. Other men driven by the same forces of economic and social circumstance would have--and did--collapsed. Other men submitted. Not meekly to be sure, but despite the rage they felt, they were futile, impotent. They could do nothing, think nothing. Tom Joad, Mack, George, each of them in their own way were leaders. They had qualities within them that would not permit them to become unprotesting victims, a quality of cooperation, of "we" instead of "I" or "me."

Understanding, realization and achievement of a definite point of view is a long process. Each of Steinbeck's novels is an ideational experience, and as such, is a process--a process which is an attempt by Steinbeck to contact the reader's realization. Chapter by chapter he builds up the total pattern of his novel. In this succession of chapters, the various contributory ideas form a pattern defining the main theme.

In the same way, Steinbeck builds up the symbolism of his characters, and of the events that take place. The value of a symbol lies in its emerging from a pattern of related experience. This is emergent functional symbolism. Steinbeck does not describe the symbolism of an event or an experience; his characters live the exper-



ience that is the symbol.<sup>13</sup>

Steinbeck is one of the most intellectually consistent thinkers and artists among contemporary American authors. All of his emergent ideas are based on an integrated philosophy, which has already been outlined. His artistic perspective, emergent from this philosophic perspective, is equally as integrated. He does not attempt to reach a conclusion in his novels; he attempts primarily to point out the meaning of contemporary life through the medium of the novel as an art-form. The advantage to the reader in having literary material so presented is that it preserves the relative values of the experiential elements used as subject matter. By allowing the reader to make his own value judgements; by allowing the reader to realize that values emerge as a result of the careful and deliberate artistic selection of not only the experiential elements themselves, but the order in which they are placed, an increased participation by the reader takes place.

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<sup>13</sup> "A genuine poet, in his moments of genuine poetry, never mentions by name the emotions he is expressing." R. G. Collingwood, Principles of Art, p. 112. Cf., also, comment by Edwin Ruthven Walker, given in a footnote (post), Chap. Six, The Grapes of Wrath, Influence of Steinbeck's philosophy.





In this "selection" there arises a problem: when is selection art, and when is it propaganda? Writing becomes propaganda when an author uses language to influence the opinions of his readers. If the language in which this propaganda is expressed takes on the form of a novel, a play, a poem, or a short story, it is then a novel, play, poem or short story--but it is not art. In order for language to become literature--an art-form--it must stimulate in others a realization of the significance of life. It can never be used as a means of influencing the opinions of others toward a desired end. The construct of a work of art that has been previously set up should be applied as criteria for determining whether a literary work is a work of art.<sup>14</sup>

Is Steinbeck a propagandist? This question is best answered by an investigation into his works. In The Grapes of Wrath, he points out the sociological effect an abnormal economic condition can cause. He has Tom Joad and Ma Joad say that something must be done, that something will be done, but Steinbeck himself advocates no specific change. In In Dubious Battle, published prior to The Grapes of Wrath, the following conversation between Doc Burton, the physician, and Mac, the Communist labor

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<sup>14</sup> Cf. Chap. Two, The Work of Art Totality.



leader, is indicative of Steinbeck's own attitude:

Mac spoke softly, for the night seemed to be listening. "You're a mystery to me, too, Doc."

"Me? A mystery?"

"Yes, you. You're not a party man, but you work with us all the time; you never get anything for it. I don't know whether you believe in what we're doing or not, you never say, you just work. I've been out with you before, and I'm not sure you believe in the cause at all."

Dr. Burton laughed softly. "It would be hard to say. I could tell you some of the things I think; you might not like them. I'm pretty sure you wouldn't like them."

"Well, let's hear them, anyway."

"Well, you say I don't believe in the cause. That's like not believing in the moon. There've been communes before, and there will be again. But you people have an idea that if you can establish the thing, the job will be done. Nothing stops, Mac. If you were able to put an idea into effect tomorrow, it would start changing right away. Establish a commune, and the same gradual flux will continue."

"Then you don't think the cause is good?"

Burton sighed. "You see? We're going to pile up on that old rock again. That's why I don't like to talk very often. Listen to me, Mac. My senses aren't above reproach, but they're all I have. I want to see the whole picture--as nearly as I can. I don't want to put on the blinders of 'good' and 'bad,' and limit my vision. If I used the term 'good' on a thing I'd lose my license to inspect it, because there might be bad in it. Don't you see? I want to be able to look at the whole thing."

Mac broke in heatedly, "How about social injustice? The profit system? You have to say they're bad."

Dr. Burton threw back his head and looked at the sky. "Mac," he said. "Look at the physiological injustice, the injustice of tetanus, the injustice of syphilis, the gangster methods of amoebic dysentery--that's my field."

"Revolution and communism will cure social injustice."

"Yes, and disinfection and prophylaxis will prevent the others."

"It's different, though; men are doing one, and germs are doing the other."

"I can't see much difference, Mac."

THE HISTORY OF THE UNITED STATES OF AMERICA

The history of the United States of America is a story of growth and change. It begins with the first settlers, who came to the continent in search of a new life. They found a land of vast resources and opportunities, but also one of challenges and hardships. Over time, the colonies grew into a nation, and the people began to assert their independence from British rule. This led to the American Revolution, a war that shaped the nation's identity and values. The new nation was founded on the principles of liberty, justice, and equality, and it has since become a model for other countries. The history of the United States is a testament to the power of the human spirit and the ability of a people to overcome adversity and build a better future.



"Well, damn it, Doc, there's lockjaw everyplace. You can find syphilis in Park Avenue. Why do you hang around with us if you aren't for us?"

"I want to see," Burton said. "When you cut your finger, and streptococci get in the wound, there's a swelling and a soreness. That swelling is the fight your body puts up, the pain is the battle. You can't tell which one is going to win, but the wound is the first battleground. If the cells lose the first fight the streptococci invade, and the fight goes on up the arm. Mac, these little strikes are like the infection. Something has got into the men; a little fever had started and the lymphatic glands are shooting in reinforcements. I want to see, so I go to the seat of the wound."

"You figure the strike is a wound?"

"Yes. Group-men are always getting some kind of infection. This seems to be a bad one. I want to see, Mac. I want to watch these group-men, for they seem to me to be a new individual, not at all like single men. A man in a group isn't himself at all, he's a cell in an organism that isn't like him any more than the cells in your body are like you. I want to watch the group, and see what it's like. People have said, 'mobs are crazy, you can't tell what they'll do.' Why don't people look at mobs not as men, but as mobs? A mob nearly always seems to act reasonably, for a mob."

"Well, what's this got to do with the cause?"

"It might be like this, Mac: When group-man wants to move, he makes a standard. 'God wills that we re-capture the Holy Land'; or he says, 'We fight to make the world safe for democracy'; or he says, 'We will wipe out social injustice with communism.' But the group doesn't care about the Holy Land, or Democracy, or Communism. Maybe the group simply wants to move, to fight, and uses these words simply to reassure the brains of individual men. I say it might be like that, Mac."

"Not with the cause, it isn't," Mac cried.

"Maybe not, it's just the way I think of things."

Mac said, "The trouble with you, Doc, is you're too God-damn far left to be a communist. You go too far with collectivization. How do you account for people like me, directing things, moving things? That puts your group-man out."

"You might be an effect as well as a cause, Mac. You might be an expression of group-man, a cell endowed with a special function, like an eye-cell, drawing your force from group-man, and at the same time directing



The first part of the paper is devoted to a discussion of the  
 various methods which have been proposed for the determination of  
 the rate of reaction between a solid and a liquid. It is shown that  
 the most reliable method is that of measuring the change in the  
 concentration of the solid reactant. This method is applicable to  
 all cases in which the solid reactant is present in excess and  
 its concentration can be measured. The method of measuring the  
 change in the concentration of the liquid reactant is only applicable  
 to cases in which the liquid reactant is present in excess and  
 its concentration can be measured. The method of measuring the  
 change in the concentration of the product is only applicable to  
 cases in which the product is present in excess and its  
 concentration can be measured. The method of measuring the  
 change in the concentration of the solid reactant is the most  
 reliable method in all cases.

him, like an eye. Your eye both takes orders from and gives orders to your brain."

"That isn't practical," Mac said disgustedly. "What's all this kind of talk got to do with hungry men, with lay-offs and unemployment?"

"It might have a great deal to do with them. It isn't a very long time since tetanus and lockjaw were not connected. There are still primitives in the world who don't know children are the result of intercourse. Yes, it might be worth while to know more about group-man, to know his nature, his ends, his desires. They're not the same as ours. The pleasure we get in scratching an itch causes death to a great number of cells. Maybe group-man gets pleasure when individual men are wiped out in a war. I simply want to see as much as I can, Mac, with the means I have.

Mac stood up and brushed the seat of his pants. "If you see too darn much, you don't get anything done."

.....  
Burton laughed apologetically. "I don't know why I go on talking....You practical men always lead practical men with stomachs. And something always gets out of hand. Your men get out of hand, they don't follow the rules of common sense, and you practical men either deny that it is so, or refuse to think about it. And when someone wonders what it is that makes a man with a stomach something more than your rule allows, why you howl, 'Dreamer, mystic, metaphysician.' I don't know why I talk about it to a practical man. In all history there are no men who have come to such wild-eyed confusion and bewilderment as practical men leading men with stomachs."<sup>15</sup>

Steinbeck's style of writing is organic. It is fitted to the subject, to the theme, to the people, he is writing about. Primarily, Steinbeck writes about people, not causes or social factors or economics. Because his concern is for people, because his understanding of people

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<sup>15</sup> In Dubious Battle, pp. 143-47; cf. Sea of Cortez for similarity between this philosophy and Steinbeck's openly avowed philosophic perspective.



is deep and warm and sympathetic, his literary style follows the speech patterns of these people. There is a distinction here between speech and speech-pattern. Steinbeck uses both. When his characters speak, their talk is the speech of people in a particular social strata, educational level and geographical region. The dialect and jargon are both correct. Regional speech idiosyncracies can easily be set down. This is a matter of imitation. Capturing the essence of a speech-pattern is something else again. A speech-pattern is composed of the intonation, inflection, rhythm, pronunciation, elisions of certain vowel sounds and aspirates, frequently used phrases, at times, are so distinct that they can be recorded by musical notations; other times, they are so subtle as to be almost non-existent. A sensitive ear to both the music and the matter of speech is necessary to capture both speech and speech patterns.

Steinbeck's style is organically adapted to his subject and his theme; it is compounded of the speech and speech-patterns of his characters and carried over into the narrative and descriptive passages. It is functional style, serving to arouse an emotional response in the reader. The emotive connotation of a sentence is fully as important as the ideational connotation when it is made to serve the purpose of arousing a psychological

THE HISTORY OF THE  
CITY OF BOSTON  
FROM THE FIRST SETTLEMENT  
TO THE PRESENT TIME  
BY  
JOHN HUTCHINGS  
OF THE BARRISTER AT LAW  
IN THE SUPREME COURT OF JUDICATURE  
IN NEW ENGLAND  
AND  
OF THE BARRISTER AT LAW  
IN THE SUPREME COURT OF JUDICATURE  
IN GREAT BRITAIN  
AND IRELAND  
IN TWO VOLUMES  
THE SECOND VOLUME  
LONDON  
PRINTED BY J. BARNES, ST. MARTIN'S LANE  
1796



response in the reader.

Mac, the communist labor organizer, in In Dubious Battle, says:

"...Speech has a kind of feel about it. I get the feel, and it comes out, perfectly naturally. I don't try to do it. I don't think I could help doing it. You know, Doc, men are suspicious of a man who doesn't talk their way. You can insult a man pretty badly by using a word he doesn't understand. Maybe he won't say anything, but he'll hate you for it."<sup>16</sup>

This, one may assume, is the way Steinbeck himself feels about style. It comes out naturally. Joseph Warren Beach writes of Steinbeck's style:

He has brought a style remarkable for its expressiveness without loudness or eccentricity, and a sense for rhythm and for right English idiom most unusual among contemporary writers; a manner of expression in which a strong reflective bent is felt beneath the surface of simple sentences shaped by the sensuous imagination and the proprieties of narrative. The style is strictly of today, but without the slightest suggestion of what is bizarre in the Hemingway manner, the Faulkner manner or the Wolfe manner.<sup>17</sup>

The sentimentality of John Steinbeck: Donald Weeks, in a recently published article, claims that "the sharper critics have insisted on the basic sentimentalism in Steinbeck....The answer has been to admit Steinbeck's sentimentalism. Yes, Steinbeck is sentimental; he has

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<sup>16</sup> p. 142.

<sup>17</sup> American Fiction 1920-1940, (New York: The Macmillan Company, 1941), p. 316, in discussing To a God Unknown by John Steinbeck.





called himself sentimental."<sup>18</sup>

In the immediately following paragraph, Weeks states: "There is this to be said for sentimentality; that to affairs of no consequence it gives consequence."<sup>19</sup> This implication that Steinbeck's sentimentality covers up material which is of no value, is borne out by the rest of the article.

It is important to distinguish the emotion of sentiment as it exists in the artist, as it exists in the writings of the artist, and as an emotion aroused in the reader as a result of reading what may or may not be "sentimental" writing. If the sentiment exists in the author it may be a psychological factor in stimulating the creative urge,<sup>20</sup> or it may be a psychological impediment in preventing complete objectivity by the author.

Again, a careful artist may consciously use sentimental terms (i.e., words which have a strong emotional connotation) so as to arouse certain emotions within the reader, without himself experiencing these emotions either

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<sup>18</sup> "Steinbeck Against Steinbeck," The Pacific Spectator, 1:447, Autumn, 1947.

<sup>19</sup> Loc. cit.

<sup>20</sup> Cf. ante, Chap. Two, Art as a process: the artist.

THE HISTORY OF THE

REIGN OF KING CHARLES THE FIRST

IN THE YEAR 1649

BY JOHN BURNET

OF THE UNIVERSITY OF OXFORD

IN TWO VOLUMES

LONDON

Printed by J. Streater

At the Sign of the Gun

in St. Dunstons Church

1680

By Authority

Printed by J. Streater

At the Sign of the Gun

in St. Dunstons Church

1680

By Authority

Printed by J. Streater

At the Sign of the Gun

in St. Dunstons Church

1680

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At the Sign of the Gun

in St. Dunstons Church

1680

By Authority

Printed by J. Streater

at the time of writing or as a previously experienced stimulus to the act of creation. Finally, the writer may have had no intention of arousing the emotion of sentimentality within the reader, nor are his words strongly connotative of sentimental emotion, yet the reader feels this emotion deeply and strongly (due to other psychological causes) at the time of reading.

In the case of John Steinbeck, it seems that he is stimulated by his "love" for human beings, and that the emotion of love--closely allied with the feeling of sentimentality--is what stimulates his artistic sensitivity. Here, several factors must be understood clearly: Sentimentality should not, of necessity, be considered a deprecatory term. It need not be a shallow emotion; it can be deep, indeed. Stimulation by any emotion does not apply directly to the stimulation of the creative urge; it may be a stimulation of the sensitivity of the artist to recognize certain values within experience which become the materials used in the creation of art.<sup>21</sup>

Sentimentality, as a word, is an abstraction that must be clarified. Its clarification depends upon the qualitative use of the emotion, in a case such as this.

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<sup>21</sup> Cf. ante, Chap. Two, Art as a process: the artist.



Professor Weeks claims that Steinbeck rationalizes his sentimentality, thus implying that sentimentality is an emotion that an author should not properly have, or having it, should not use. But, an emotion is a teleological construct.<sup>22</sup> In the field of literature, as in any of the arts, it is an instrument capable of being used by the artist to produce certain additional values in his object of art. In arousing a particular emotion, the artist arouses in the appreciator definite emotional attitudes which are conducive to increased perceptivity on the part of the appreciator to values whose subtlety would otherwise have prevented their being recognized. It is only by an appreciator in a definite attitude that these values can be appreciated to their fullest. This, of course, brings up another problem: when is it advantageous to the critic to achieve complete objectivity, and when is it advantageous to participate emotionally in the work of art?

In order to criticize the literary work, which is in reality the artistic experience, the critic must undergo the artistic experience. This calls for a suspension of any prior beliefs or predetermined ideas which

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<sup>22</sup> Cf. Knight Dunlap, "Are Emotions Teleological Constructs?" The American Journal of Psychology, 44: 572-76, 1932.





might prevent the experience from being fulfilled in all its completeness. Only after the experience is completed, can a critical examination take place, whether it results in a judgement, or in an indicative evaluation. Critical standards used as a basis for judgement determine the area in which, and the scale on which, this judgement places the work. These critical standards should be made clear to the reader.

Indicative evaluation is the aim of the gestalt critic;<sup>23</sup> that is, an evaluation criticism which indicates the values that are potential in the work-of-art experience, so that the reader may enrich his experiential background. This is the contribution of the critic to the culture in which he lives; only in making this contribution does the critic fully function.<sup>24</sup>

Steinbeck is a conscious enough craftsman to use sentiment as a valuable functional tool. In his case, it is the artist taking advantage of his own skill to endow his work with those values which can be achieved only through subtlety. Effective symbolism is, to a great extent, dependent upon first arousing a receptive emotional

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<sup>23</sup> Cf. post, Chap. Nine, Gestalt Criticism.

<sup>24</sup> For the function of the critic, cf. ante, Introduction, and cf. post, Chap. Nine, Gestalt Criticism where it is discussed in greater detail.



state in the appreciator.

Professor Weeks states: "In Tortilla Flat, Steinbeck wrote a masterpiece of sentimentality."<sup>25</sup> Nowhere in his discussion does Weeks mention Steinbeck's statement that Tortilla Flat was to resemble the Arthurian cycle of the Mallory version, yet Professor Weeks is familiar with the Lewis Gannett foreword to The Portable Steinbeck in which one of Steinbeck's letters to his agents is quoted, which states this fact.<sup>26</sup>

However, Professor Weeks is one of the few critics to analyze Steinbeck's work in relation to his philosophy, albeit his analysis is influenced by his own philosophy which appears to be at variance with Steinbeck's non-teleological thinking. Thus, Weeks writes:

To me, the Foreword [by Steinbeck to the Modern Library edition of Tortilla Flat] is a rationalization in terms of the philosophy which from 1935 on Steinbeck fails to bring into coherence with his art. To me, it is a philosophy which encourages Steinbeck to rationalize his sentimentality. This philosophy he may have acquired from his friend, Dr. Edward Ricketts, without ever understanding its relation to his art, and especially to his sentimentality. It is a philosophy best expressed in Sea of Cortez (1941), written in collaboration with Dr. Ricketts, and worst expressed in Cannery Row (1945), where Ricketts appears slightly disguised as Doc, and where passages of Sea of Cortez reappear as fiction....<sup>27</sup>

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<sup>25</sup> Op. cit.

<sup>26</sup> This foreword was originally an article. Cf. "John Steinbeck: Novelist at Work," The Atlantic Monthly, 176: 55-60, December, 1945.

<sup>27</sup> Op. cit.





Professor Weeks goes on to state:

My biologist friends tell me that speculations on purpose have ruined many a biologist, who if he were a good biologist would be willing to leave teleology to the philosopher, who if he were a good philosopher would leave it to the psychologist. For the artist, his philosophy may be the sum of the books he has read and the friends he has listened to.<sup>28</sup>

What Professor Weeks does not appear to grasp is that Steinbeck's philosophy is an indication of the climate of intellectual thought which influences his artistic standards, and that artistic standards are not separable from the philosophies out of which they emerge. Since Steinbeck, however he may have attained it, has a definite and conscious philosophy--a philosophy which has already been shown in this thesis to be in the Modern Climate of Opinion--it follows that his artistic standards are equally as definite. The question remains: Is Steinbeck consciously aware of these artistic standards? This, of course, can be answered only by Steinbeck, himself. Any other answer a critic may arrive at, without further word from Steinbeck, is at best a conjecture, although there is a decided amount of evidence (in the form of letters by Steinbeck to his literary agent)<sup>29</sup> in favor of an affirmative answer.

"The philosophy of Sea of Cortez," writes Professor

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<sup>28</sup> Loc. cit.

<sup>29</sup> Op. cit.



# THE HISTORY OF THE UNITED STATES

The history of the United States is a story of growth and change. From the first settlers to the present day, the nation has evolved through various stages of development. The early years were marked by exploration and settlement, followed by a period of rapid expansion and industrialization. The American Revolution and the Civil War were pivotal moments in the nation's history, shaping its identity and values.

The American Revolution was a turning point in the nation's history. It was a struggle for independence from British rule, fought between 1775 and 1783. The revolution led to the creation of the United States as a sovereign nation, with its own government and constitution. The Civil War, fought between 1861 and 1865, was another pivotal moment in the nation's history. It was a conflict over the issue of slavery, which ultimately resulted in the abolition of slavery and the preservation of the Union.

The American Civil War was a conflict that shaped the nation's identity. It was a struggle over the issue of slavery, which ultimately resulted in the abolition of slavery and the preservation of the Union. The war was fought between the Northern states, which opposed slavery, and the Southern states, which supported it. The war ended in 1865, with the Union victorious and slavery abolished.

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Weeks, "commits Steinbeck to realism, and Steinbeck is not a realist. He cannot describe objectively. His feelings commit him to celebration."<sup>30</sup>

But, Steinbeck is a realist, if by realism we understand there is more than just one variety. Steinbeck's realism concerns itself so greatly with expression in the form of symbolism that he may be termed a symbolic realist. That is to say, he sees things in terms of symbols which express experiential realities and relationships. If one understands this, then what would be an excess of sentimentality on the part of another writer becomes no more than necessary in the case of Steinbeck's writings. Emotion intensifies the symbol. Emotion used as a functional tool is the sign of a careful writer conscious of definite artistic standards. Certainly, in the forms that Steinbeck has used to present his prose material one can find evidence that Steinbeck has attempted to use classical literary forms in a modern sense, without a slavish imitation of the classical form. He has written a parable (The Pearl), an allegory (The Wayward Bus), and

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<sup>30</sup> Op. cit.



a saga (Tortilla Flat).<sup>31</sup> Each, however, differs slightly from the classical form because of its adaption to allow for organic symbolism.

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<sup>31</sup> Cf. Gannett, op. cit., p. 57, for evidence of Steinbeck's familiarity with classical literary forms. Gannett states: "Obviously, Steinbeck as a writer was never quite the naive primitive discovered by some of his holty-toity critics."

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## CHAPTER SIX

### THE GRAPES OF WRATH

The Grapes of Wrath is more than a sociological document: it is an address to a way of life. Its title is a symbol connotative of the emotional intensity engendered by the entire "Battle Hymn of the Republic," including the inseparably emotional effect of the martial music to which it is sung.

Mine eyes have seen the glory of the coming of the  
Lord:  
He is trampling out the vintage where the grapes  
of wrath are stored;  
He hath loosed the fateful lightning of his terrible  
swift sword;  
His truth is marching on.

I have seen Him in the watch-fires of a hundred  
circling camps;  
They have builded Him an altar in the evening dews  
and damps;  
I can read his righteous sentence by the dim and  
flaring lamps;  
His day is marching on.

I have read a fiery gospel writ in burnished rows  
of steel:  
"As ye deal with my contemners, so with you my  
grace shall deal;  
Let the Hero, born of woman, crush the serpent  
with his heel,  
Since God is marching on."

He has sounded forth the trumpet that shall never  
call retreat;  
He is sifting out the hearts of men before His  
judgement-seat;



# Introduction

## 1. Background

The purpose of this study is to investigate the effects of various factors on the performance of a system. The study is divided into two main parts: a theoretical analysis and an experimental investigation. The theoretical analysis will focus on the development of a model that can predict the system's performance based on the input variables. The experimental investigation will involve the design and execution of experiments to validate the model and to determine the range of conditions over which it is applicable.

The first part of the study, the theoretical analysis, will involve the derivation of a set of equations that describe the system's behavior. These equations will be based on the principles of physics and the specific characteristics of the system under study. The second part of the study, the experimental investigation, will involve the design and execution of experiments to validate the model and to determine the range of conditions over which it is applicable.

The experimental investigation will be carried out in a laboratory setting. The system will be constructed and its performance will be measured under a variety of conditions. The results of the experiments will be compared with the predictions of the model to determine the accuracy of the model and to identify any areas where it may be improved.

The results of the study will be presented in a series of papers. The first paper will describe the theoretical analysis and the development of the model. The second paper will describe the experimental investigation and the results of the experiments. The third paper will discuss the implications of the results and the potential applications of the model.

The study is a collaborative effort between several researchers. The theoretical analysis was carried out by [Name], and the experimental investigation was carried out by [Name]. The results of the study are the product of a collective effort and are presented here for the benefit of the research community.

Oh, be swift, my soul, to answer him; Be jubilant,  
my feet!

Our God is marching on.

In the beauty of the lilies Christ was born across  
the sea,

With a glory in his bosom that transfigures you  
and me:

As he died to make men holy, let us die to make  
men free,

While God is marching on.<sup>1</sup>

The interaction of meaning between the novel The Grapes of Wrath and the hymn is one in which each intensifies the meaning of the other in a rhythmical and cumulative surcharging. The implications inherent in each are made more meaningful by a reading of the other.<sup>2</sup>

The demo-epic, The Grapes of Wrath is a "demo-epic."<sup>3</sup>

It is a novel dealing with patterns of experience showing the comradeship of men. It is an epic of democracy.

Certain economic forces operative at that period (and

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<sup>1</sup> Julia Ward Howe, cited in Jay B. Hubbell, ed., American Life in Literature, I, 686.

<sup>2</sup> Lewis Gannett, in an article, wrote: "In September, 1938, the title went to New York to Steinbeck's literary agents on a postcard, followed by a letter saying that Steinbeck liked the title 'because it is a march, because it is in our revolutionary tradition and because in reference to this book it has a large meaning.'" "John Steinbeck: Novelist at Work," The Atlantic Monthly, 176: 55-60, December, 1945.

<sup>3</sup> Professor Post, in a lecture, 1946.

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still operative) were antagonistic to a continuance of society in its then present state. These causes, inimical to the very existence of great numbers of Americans, because of their enmity, resulted in a democratic unity and cooperative activity by these men and women. The process of this democratic action is the theme of The Grapes of Wrath.

The influence of Steinbeck's philosophy. The novel is a positive treatment of the democratic way of life. Given an opportunity, Steinbeck maintains, people automatically respond to the democratic process of living. This thesis, of course, is a result of Steinbeck's philosophy that organic life is naturally democratic. The functional response of every character in The Grapes of Wrath to the democratic process is a result of Steinbeck's belief in the right of every individual to achieve his own excellence and the right to contribute this excellence to the corporate whole of society.

Art is a clarification and a crystallization of the elements of a cultural pattern. How well and how sensitively a novel does this measures its relative value in

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the field of the novel as an art-form.<sup>4</sup>

Two hundred years of American folk-democracy have been frustrated by the economics of the exploitation of human beings for profit. This is implied in the opening chapters of The Grapes of Wrath. Natural goodness and belief in the brotherhood of man have been imprisoned in the man-made shell of the "economic man." The used car dealers, the bank representatives, the orange growers, the state troopers, the sheriff and his deputies--all of them are forced to act in ways contrary to basic human motivations because of an economic environment which decrees that the continuance of their own livelihood is dependent upon their maintenance of this particular economic system.

According to Steinbeck's philosophy, species preservation is the primary consideration of life. Self-

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<sup>4</sup> Edwin Ruthven Walker, in an article, "A Philosopher's Notes on Photography," The American Annual of Photography, 1948, vol. 62, 77 ff., wrote: "The artist is a person of insight. What he sees he embodies in a work of art and holds it up for other persons to experience. If the meaning he grasps could be put into clarifying words, there would be no reason for him to embody that meaning in his art. John Steinbeck bought an old jalopy and travelled the roads with the dispossessed farmers. A sociologist or an economist would have analyzed the situations experienced. But Steinbeck is an artist. What he saw could not be expressed in terms of sociological or economic analysis. He re-created his experiences in a work of art, and all men who read 'The Grapes of Wrath' share those experiences with him."



1870-1871

The first year of the war was a year of great suffering and hardship for the people of the North. The war had begun in 1861, and the North had been fighting for three years. The war had been a long and hard one, and the people of the North had suffered many hardships. The war had been a year of great suffering and hardship for the people of the North.

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preservation comes next. Reproduction is one phase of species preservation but is not that alone, of course. A coward, thus, is one who places self-preservation above species preservation; a hero acts for species preservation. Any economic system that endangers the life of the species must be attacked by the species. The attack upon the inimical force is caused by the presence of that force itself. Man reacts not only to a hostile natural environment, but also to a hostile artificial (economic) environment. The irony is that man himself has created this particular hostile form of economic environment. He must control it so that it does not become hostile; or, becoming hostile, it must be eliminated. The Grapes of Wrath is thus also an investigation of the function of democratic government. Steinbeck implies that government must act as the engineering mechanism to establish a framework for the larger economic life so that it may be a helpful rather than an inimical environment.

American life has been imprisoned in the economic pattern, claims Steinbeck. This thesis is evident in his other works as well, almost all of which attack the problem from different perspectives. The Grapes of Wrath is mostly concerned with the brutalizing effect of a materialistic culture. It deals with man's abandonment of truth for a verbalistic mysticism used to make man tolerate his con-

1. The first part of the document discusses the importance of maintaining accurate records of all transactions and activities. It emphasizes the need for transparency and accountability in financial reporting.

2. The second part of the document outlines the various methods and techniques used to collect and analyze data. It includes a detailed description of the experimental procedures and the statistical analysis performed.

3. The third part of the document presents the results of the study. It includes a series of tables and graphs that illustrate the findings of the research. The data shows a clear trend of increasing activity over time.

4. The fourth part of the document discusses the implications of the findings. It suggests that the results of the study have significant implications for the field of research and may lead to further developments in the future.

5. The fifth part of the document concludes the study. It summarizes the main findings and provides a final statement on the importance of the research.

dition. Not until starvation and death confront him does man again go back to the truth of experience as reality rather than to the verbalistic "Truth" with which he has been deluded. The problem is a difficult process in understanding, and the semantic confusion which envelops both the representatives of the bank, and the farmers who have lost their farms, is indicative of the "reasoning" of that materialistic culture:

...It's not us, it's the bank. A bank isn't like a man. Or an owner with fifty thousand acres, he isn't like a man either. That's the monster.

Sure, cried the tenant men, but it's our land. We measured it and broke it up. We were born on it, and we got killed on it, died on it. Even if it's no good, it's still ours. That's what makes it ours--being born on it, working it, dying on it. That makes ownership, not a paper with numbers on it.

We're sorry. It's not us. It's the monster. The bank isn't like a man.

Yes, but the bank is only made of men.

No, you're wrong there--quite wrong there. The bank is something else than men. It happens that every man in a bank hates what the bank does, and yet the bank does it. The bank is something more than men, I tell you. It's the monster. Men made it, but they can't control it.<sup>5</sup>

The theme of the novel is that the "grapes of wrath" sown by economic-environmental pressures are gradually driving man to regain his heritage of democratic living by direct action. Dependent upon the viewpoint and beliefs of observer and--or--participant, this action may be labelled as a revolt, a deprivation of man's property

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<sup>5</sup> p. 45.

The first part of the paper is devoted to the study of the properties of the function  $f(x)$  defined by the equation  $f(x) = \sum_{n=0}^{\infty} a_n x^n$ , where  $a_n$  are the coefficients of the power series. It is shown that  $f(x)$  is a continuous function of  $x$  and that it satisfies the functional equation  $f(x) = f(x^2) + x f(x)$ . This equation is solved by the method of successive approximations, and it is shown that the solution is unique. The second part of the paper is devoted to the study of the properties of the function  $g(x)$  defined by the equation  $g(x) = \sum_{n=0}^{\infty} b_n x^n$ , where  $b_n$  are the coefficients of the power series. It is shown that  $g(x)$  is a continuous function of  $x$  and that it satisfies the functional equation  $g(x) = g(x^2) + x g(x)$ . This equation is solved by the method of successive approximations, and it is shown that the solution is unique.



The third part of the paper is devoted to the study of the properties of the function  $h(x)$  defined by the equation  $h(x) = \sum_{n=0}^{\infty} c_n x^n$ , where  $c_n$  are the coefficients of the power series. It is shown that  $h(x)$  is a continuous function of  $x$  and that it satisfies the functional equation  $h(x) = h(x^2) + x h(x)$ . This equation is solved by the method of successive approximations, and it is shown that the solution is unique. The fourth part of the paper is devoted to the study of the properties of the function  $k(x)$  defined by the equation  $k(x) = \sum_{n=0}^{\infty} d_n x^n$ , where  $d_n$  are the coefficients of the power series. It is shown that  $k(x)$  is a continuous function of  $x$  and that it satisfies the functional equation  $k(x) = k(x^2) + x k(x)$ . This equation is solved by the method of successive approximations, and it is shown that the solution is unique.

The fifth part of the paper is devoted to the study of the properties of the function  $l(x)$  defined by the equation  $l(x) = \sum_{n=0}^{\infty} e_n x^n$ , where  $e_n$  are the coefficients of the power series. It is shown that  $l(x)$  is a continuous function of  $x$  and that it satisfies the functional equation  $l(x) = l(x^2) + x l(x)$ . This equation is solved by the method of successive approximations, and it is shown that the solution is unique.

rights and "wrong"; or, it may be termed necessary in view of human rights, a relief of the needy, an action that is great because of man's cooperativeness, and thus "right." Again, it is a matter involving the philosophy of the one who makes the judgement. Here, Steinbeck presents the facts of the human problem and allows the reader to make his own judgement.

Steinbeck does advocate a religion of brotherly love and humanity as being greater than theistic religion. This is a religion not of talk but of action; it is the religion of democracy.

Symbolism in The Grapes of Wrath. The Joads are a functional symbol (i.e., a developmental symbol emerging as the novel progresses) of American democracy. They represent eight generations of America. They stand not so much for Oklahoma farmers but for the whole American folk-past and represent the problems confronting contemporary America. It is because of this that they are important as characters.

There is the symbolism of the epic tragedy of Tom Joad's homecoming. Jailed because he killed a man in self-defense, Tom Joad returns home to find his family dispossessed and preparing to leave the state. The problem confronting him concerns the importance of family over the





individual. Is the continued unity of the social whole (the family) of more value to him than his own security? If he leaves with them he violates his parole and endangers himself. If he does not, he cannot contribute his strength to the family in a time of expected emergency. Tom Joad is a Christ-like character in his sacrificing of himself for the common good, for, when it later becomes necessary, he leaves the family group so as not to endanger it by his presence. There is a similar martyrdom and Christ-likeness in the case of Casy. He is a preacher, like Christ, who, dissatisfied with the meaninglessness of the religion he had been preaching, sought for the meaning of life in brotherly love. He is Christ-like in his kindness, in his sensitivity, in his understanding, and, as a symbol of Christ-likeness, is persecuted and killed by the society in which he lives.<sup>6</sup> Noah is the ascetic in American life. He is the symbol of withdrawal, of those who prefer to live in the world of the imagination alone. That this is an

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<sup>6</sup> Cf. p. 535. Tom Joad, telling Ma Joad of Casy's death, quotes Casy's last words to his murderer: "'...Casy said, 'You got no right to starve people.' And...Casy says, 'You don' know what you're a-doin'.'" An' then this guy smashed 'im.'"

Compare this fragment with Luke, 23:34, "Then said Jesus, Father, forgive them; for they know not what they do."

1. The first part of the document discusses the importance of maintaining accurate records of all transactions and activities. It emphasizes that this is crucial for ensuring transparency and accountability in the organization's operations.

2. The second part outlines the various methods and tools used to collect and analyze data. This includes both traditional manual methods and modern digital technologies, highlighting the benefits of each approach.

3. The third part focuses on the role of the management team in overseeing the data collection process. It stresses the need for clear communication and coordination between different departments to ensure that data is collected consistently and accurately.

4. The fourth part discusses the challenges faced during the data collection process, such as data quality issues, incomplete information, and the risk of data loss. It provides strategies to mitigate these risks and ensure the integrity of the data.

5. The fifth part concludes by summarizing the key findings and recommendations. It reiterates the importance of a robust data collection system and suggests areas for future improvement and research.

abnormal state is suggested by the stated abnormality of Noah, injured at birth.

Steinbeck samples the elements of life at large in The Grapes of Wrath. The four generations of Joads represent the continuity of family life in addition to being symptomatic of human life. They represent the functioning of the life cycle.

The closing scene of The Grapes of Wrath is indicative, in a symbolic sense, of the theme of the novel--a theme that runs through everything Steinbeck has ever written. Life is progressive and achieves meaning on the human level when it is cooperative. If one has life to share, one gives it to those who need it!<sup>7</sup> This theme has its corollary in the statement that life, to be democratic, must be cooperative.

In the symbolism of the last passage, when Rosasharn bares her breast so that a starving man might drink her milk and live, Steinbeck ends The Grapes of Wrath on a note of artistic cumulation. It is indeed dramatic, sentimental, emotional, and the very drama, sentiment and emotion emphasize the importance of the symbolism of the episode.

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<sup>7</sup> Cf. The Grapes of Wrath, p. 66; p. 353, for fragments indicative of this theme.

The first of these is the fact that the system is not in equilibrium.

The second is the fact that the system is not in equilibrium.

The third is the fact that the system is not in equilibrium.

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The ninth is the fact that the system is not in equilibrium.

The tenth is the fact that the system is not in equilibrium.

The eleventh is the fact that the system is not in equilibrium.

The twelfth is the fact that the system is not in equilibrium.

The thirteenth is the fact that the system is not in equilibrium.

The fourteenth is the fact that the system is not in equilibrium.

The fifteenth is the fact that the system is not in equilibrium.

The sixteenth is the fact that the system is not in equilibrium.

The seventeenth is the fact that the system is not in equilibrium.

The eighteenth is the fact that the system is not in equilibrium.

The nineteenth is the fact that the system is not in equilibrium.

The twentieth is the fact that the system is not in equilibrium.

The twenty-first is the fact that the system is not in equilibrium.

The twenty-second is the fact that the system is not in equilibrium.

The twenty-third is the fact that the system is not in equilibrium.

The twenty-fourth is the fact that the system is not in equilibrium.

The twenty-fifth is the fact that the system is not in equilibrium.

Joseph Warren Beach has this to say about the final episode:

This final episode is symbolic in its way of what is, I should say, the leading theme of the book. It is a type of the life-instinct, the vital persistence of the common people who are represented by the Joads. Their sufferings and humiliations are overwhelming; but these people are never entirely overwhelmed. They have something in them that is more than stoical endurance. It is the will to live, and the faith in life.

.....  
Rosasharn's gesture in the barn is not the only symbol of this will to live. Very early in the book the author devotes a whole chapter--a short one--to the picture of a turtle crossing the highway. It is an act of heroic obstinacy and persistence against heavy odds. This is a gem of minute description, of natural history close-up....It may be enjoyed as such. But it inevitably carries the mind by suggestion to the kindred heroisms of men and women. It sets the note for the story that is to follow.<sup>8</sup>

Rosasharn's pregnancy itself is symbolic, also. Here the symbolism is that of the right of life to continue and to be protected until able to protect itself. Life must reproduce itself for species preservation. As the mother of the embryonic child, Rosasharn has certain natural rights which are inherent with pregnancy and which must be respected. She has a prior right to whatever food is available; her share of food is greatest; she must be protected so that the unborn child will have its opportunity for life.

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<sup>8</sup> Op. cit., pp. 332-33.





But Rosasharn is a victim of economic forces. The same forces that sent the Joads destitute from Oklahoma have resulted in the still-born birth of her baby. These forces are controlled by no one, yet their effect is sociologically devastating. These forces, Steinbeck implies, will eventually eliminate civilization unless they are controlled.

Throughout the novel, the importance of the relationship of human being to human being, of human being to family and to the human family, is stressed. This emphasis is again due to Steinbeck's philosophy and the influence of Emersonian humanism upon it. Joseph Warren Beach recognized this when he wrote:

He [Steinbeck] had written up for a San Francisco newspaper his observations on seasonal labor and life in the bunk-houses. He had visited the Oklahoma dust-bowl which sent so many homeless families to California, and had made the trek West along with them. He had seen the uprooting of men in its epic proportions. He had reflected on the broad social problems underlying the special predicament of the California orchards. And so, taking his departure naturally from what he had seen in his native valley, from the men and women of his own acquaintance in Monterey County [sic], he had let his thought widen out and deepen down until he was ready to make of his story the vehicle of comprehensive and significant attitudes on the major topics of social philosophy. He had things to say of large scope on the home, the family, the community of those who live in one place, on motherhood and fatherhood, as well as on such political and economic topics as the function of police, property in hand, the nature of capitalistic enterprise,



the balance of power between labor and management, and the strike as a weapon of the class struggle.<sup>9</sup>

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<sup>9</sup> Op. cit., p. 330; cf. ante, footnote: comment by Edwin Ruthven Walker, on the same aspect of this problem.



## CHAPTER SEVEN

### THE CRITICS

Leon Whipple: The social novel. In an article in Survey Graphic, Leon Whipple asks: "Of what value is the modern novel on a social theme?" and:

By what standards shall we judge such contributions to the people's awareness of human suffering and to the willful anger that sets us about a cure?<sup>1</sup>

Mr. Whipple's standards for the social novel are then set up, as follows:

...the author must present a true case story to carry his characters and drama; he must have the principal gifts of the novelist for story telling; he must reveal that his case is not singular but general, not unique but typical; and he must have the appeals that will get his book widely read, for without a popular audience, his influence will be narrow and indirect.<sup>2</sup>

Exactly how valid Mr. Whipple's standards are can be determined by an inquiry into their philosophic basis. Obviously, the philosophy here is one primarily concerned with and focused on politico-economic socialism. Mr. Whipple's criteria for evaluation have nothing to do with literature as an art form; they are concerned rather with literature as propaganda, and thus are instruments for

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<sup>1</sup> "Novels on Social Themes," 28:401-02, June, 1939.

<sup>2</sup> Loc. cit. All quotations from Mr. Whipple are from the same source.





measuring the efficiency of the propaganda expressed. The apparent anachronism in the standards--the true story being general--is due most probably to a desire on Mr. Whipple's part to couple socialistic doctrine with art. By "art," Mr. Whipple seems to have in mind that area known as classical art. His third standard is Popean or Johnsonian in its neo-classicism, changed only in its relationship with the other standards.

Whipple's philosophy is apparent in the following statements: He calls The Grapes of Wrath a prophecy in the sense that:

....Steinbeck foresees revolt unless society is moved to do something about the sufferings of plain humans, outcast by a changing rural economy, and being prepared to trample out the red vintage of despair.

Steinbeck's deep compassion causes him to record these sufferings by the Joads, says Mr. Whipple, "with an angry and brutal naturalism designed to transfer his emotion to us and to make us do something."

And:

Steinbeck has learned what all first rate novelists learn--that you must project your tiny humans against a significant social background to give them meaning.

The "background" Mr. Whipple refers to in his statement occupies sixteen chapters of the novel, out of a total of thirty chapters. Is it a "significant social background?" As it has been pointed out earlier in this

The first part of the paper discusses the importance of the study of the history of the English language. It is argued that the study of the history of the English language is not only a matter of historical interest, but also a matter of practical importance. The study of the history of the English language is essential for the understanding of the English language in its present state. The paper then discusses the various factors which have influenced the development of the English language. These factors include the influence of other languages, the influence of the social and cultural environment, and the influence of the individual writers of the English language. The paper concludes by stating that the study of the history of the English language is a task of great importance, and that it is one which should be undertaken by all who are interested in the English language.

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thesis, Steinbeck's concern is for the forces that motivate human beings in an environment--a concern for the phylum in its natural environment--as well as for the effect of these forces upon human beings. The environment is socially significant only because it is a force that has a motivating effect upon human life, only because as the environment changes so does the pattern of human life, only because as this pattern changes human life must change its method and manner of living in order to exist without suffering. When certain humans in a society use their social influence (wealth) to attempt to retard this change the repression causes a social tension. Here is a pattern of forces operating to produce conditions of social unbalance. These are the forces Steinbeck is concerned with because of the human suffering resultant from their existence. Since Steinbeck's non-teleological thinking has already been made clear, it is relatively safe to assume that Steinbeck is not so much concerned with placing a moral blame as he is with pointing out the direction toward which our civilization is progressing, the changing pattern of American life.

In Sea of Cortez, Steinbeck wrote the following, which is particularly pertinent at this point:

During the depression there were, and still are, not only destitute but thriftless and uncareful families, and we have often heard it said that the county

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had to support them because they were shiftless and negligent. If they would only perk up and be somebody everything would be all right. Even Henry Ford in the depth of the depression gave as his solution to that problem, "Everybody ought to roll up his sleeves and get to work."

This view may be correct as far as it goes, but we wonder what would happen to those with whom the shiftless would exchange places in the large pattern--those whose jobs would be usurped, since at that time there was work for only about seventy percent of the total employable population, leaving the remainder as government wards.

This attitude has no bearing on what might be or could be if so-and-so happened. It merely considers conditions "as is." No matter what the ability or aggressiveness of the separate units of society, at that time there were, and still there are, great numbers necessarily out of work, and the fact that those numbers comprised the incompetent or maladjusted or unlucky units is in one sense beside the point. No causality is involved in that; collectively it's just "so"; collectively it's related to the fact that animals produce more offspring than the world can support. The units may be blamed as individuals, but as members of society they cannot be blamed. Any given individual very possibly may transfer from the under privileged into the more fortunate group by better luck or by improved aggressiveness or competence, but all cannot be so benefited whatever their strivings, and the large population will be unaffected. The seventy-thirty ratio will remain, with merely a reassortment of the units. And no blame, at least no social fault, imputes to these people; they are where they are "because" natural conditions are what they are. And so far as we selfishly are concerned we can rejoice that they, rather than we, represent the low extreme, since there must be one.

So if one is very aggressive he will be able to obtain work even under the most subnormal economic conditions, but only because there are others, less aggressive than he, who serve in his stead as potential government wards. In the same way, the sight of a half-wit should never depress us, since his extreme, and the extreme of his kind, so affects the mean standard that we, hatless, coatless, often bewhiskered, thereby will



The first part of the paper is devoted to a discussion of the general principles of the theory of the structure of the atom. It is shown that the structure of the atom is determined by the laws of quantum mechanics, which are based on the principle of the uncertainty of the position and momentum of the particles.

In the second part of the paper, the author discusses the results of the experiments on the structure of the atom. It is shown that the results of the experiments are in good agreement with the predictions of the theory of the structure of the atom.

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be regarded only as a little odd. And, similarly, we cannot justly approve the success manuals that tell our high school graduates how to get a job--there being jobs for only half of them!

This type of thinking unfortunately annoys many people. It may especially arouse the anger of women, who regard it as cold, even brutal, although actually it would seem to be more tender and understanding, certainly more real and less illusionary and even less blaming, than the more conventional methods of consideration. And the value of it as a tool in increased understanding cannot be denied.<sup>3</sup>

How "angry and brutal" are the emotions which Whipple claims Steinbeck attempts to transfer to the reader? What is it "designed...to make us do?" How naturalistic is the writing? These questions are best answered by comparing them to what had already been set forth in this thesis.

It is interesting to compare Leon Whipple's summary of The Grapes of Wrath with a statement he makes later in the same article, as indicative of his critical concern.

The Summary:

The Joads are "tractored out" of their forty acres in Oklahoma, after drought and debt have broken them down. They put goods and family into a rickety truck and join the unhappy migrant horde on Route 66, the via dolorosa for them and their kind. They disintegrate as a family and even as humans in California where the many-acred, one-crop food factories, with their seasonal peaks of labor hunger and labor-hatred, shunt them around and strip them of home, life, health and dignity.

The statement:

His case work is incomplete: it disregards heredity

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<sup>3</sup> pp. 132-33.



that might account for the failure of the Joads as farmers, and the psychology of certain members....

The question here arises, in connection with Mr. Whipple's third criteria, how general can a specific, documented, sociological and psychological case history be?

Mr. Whipple closes his article by claiming the novel will be read because "the conscience of America is more awake than we think"; thus proving, to himself at least, that his four criteria are valid, since The Grapes of Wrath--obviously a great novel--fulfills his criteria in his examination.

He does not see that Steinbeck's concern is focused upon economic and political forces only because they are contributory to the totality of human environment. These economic and political forces change and effect the environment in which human life exists; Steinbeck is concerned with the change. His concern for forces effecting environment is as great and intense in his later Sea of Cortez, although it is a marine environment which he mostly examines in the latter. Steinbeck expresses this artistically in The Grapes of Wrath:

The moving, questing people were migrants now....And they scampered about, looking for work; and the highways were streams of people, and the ditch banks were lines of people. Behind them more were coming. The great highways streamed with moving people....

And then suddenly the machines pushed them out and they swarmed on the highways. The movement changed them;



the highways, the camps along the road, the fear of hunger and the hunger itself, changed them. The children without dinner changed them, the endless moving changed them. They were migrants. And the hostility changed them, welded them, united them--hostility that made the little towns group and arm as though to repel ~~the~~ an invader, squads with pick handles, clerks and storekeepers with shotguns, guarding the world against their own people.

In the West there was panic when the migrants multiplied on the highways....And the men of the towns and of the soft suburban country gathered to defend themselves...

.....

The local people whipped themselves into a mold of cruelty.

And the migrants streamed in on the highways and their hunger was in their eyes, and their need was in their eyes. They had no argument, no system, nothing but their numbers and their needs...

.....

And now, the great owners and the companies invented a new method....And the little farmers who owned no canneries lost their farms....And then they too went on the highways. And the roads were crowded....

And the companies, the banks worked at their own doom and they did not know it. The fields were fruitful, and starving men moved on the roads. The granaries were full and the children of the poor grew up rachitic, and the pustules of pellagra swelled on their sides. The great companies did not know that the line between hunger and anger is a thin line. And money that might have gone to wages went for gas, for guns, for agents and spies, for blacklists, for drilling. On the highways the people moved like ants and searched for work, for food. And the anger began to ferment.<sup>4</sup>

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<sup>4</sup> The Grapes of Wrath, (New York: The Modern Library, n.d.), pp. 385-89.



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The movement is a force, the economics of America 1938 is a force, the hunger and the anger and the causes are all forces whose interaction builds up in a cumulative tension that changes the direction of our civilization. It does not mean a revolt. Even a revolt is only another element in the total pattern of progression. Steinbeck's understanding encompasses more than the causes leading to a revolt. His understanding goes out to all the forces that effect our civilization. It is the totality of pattern that he is concerned ith, which includes even Mr. Whipple's "social themes."

Wilbur L. Schramm: The proletarian novel, and the common man. In an article written in 1939, Mr. Schramm calls John Steinbeck "the most promising young author in America,"<sup>5</sup> which is praise critics have given Steinbeck when they understood what he was doing, and which has been retracted when they did not.

Professor Schramm's estimate of Steinbeck is as follows:

[Steinbeck had] ...almost from the beginning qualities [of] ...objectivity, solidity, and, above all, the ability to lose himself in something greater than himself, the ability to connect his wires to a voltage greater

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<sup>5</sup> "Careers at Crossroads," Virginia Quarterly Review, 15 no. 4:630-2, October, 1939. All quotations from the same source.

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than his own. In Steinbeck's case this is the problem of the common man. For several years now he has been producing warm, powerful portraits of common men, each book showing some advance over the one preceding, each book showing great power moving toward maturity.

Once again, it is important to understand both the philosophic perspective of the critic (which enables one to understand the critical standards he uses in evaluation) and that of the author being criticized, so that one may determine how closely the critic has come in applying standards comprehensive enough to include the direction of the particular artistic drive under consideration. Wilbur Schramm's figurative statement, "the ability to connect his wires to a voltage greater than his own," implies that the function of the artist is that of translation (or transmission) alone, that the artist adds nothing to the work in question. Perhaps this estimate of Professor Schramm's critical standards is incorrect, for later in the same article he makes the statement that the story of The Grapes of Wrath concerns "...farmers driven from their land by dust and depression and centralizing economics, driven to seek vainly for asylum in California," thus showing a greater understanding of Steinbeck's focus on motivating forces than most other critics.

Steinbeck has the ability, says Professor Schramm:

...to breathe life into his characters and to tear at our hearts with their problems and their struggles. Whereas John Dos Passos' social books are built on hate

THE UNIVERSITY OF CHICAGO  
DEPARTMENT OF CHEMISTRY  
JANUARY 1950

TO THE HONORABLE CHAIRMAN OF THE BOARD OF TRUSTEES  
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for an economic system, "The Grapes of Wrath" is built on a love for people bound to that system. It is a significant difference.

Schramm, who makes no mention of the symbolism of The Grapes of Wrath, or the symbolism in it, sees the "intercalary"<sup>6</sup> chapters as a means of relating the Joads to "the whole exodus by means of impersonal chapters, sort of poetic history."

The validity of a critical review is dependent upon quantitative as well as qualitative criteria. However, it is not to be assumed that these are separate criteria, or that they function separately. They are parts of the same criterion, achieving its validity from the completeness as well as the thoroughness of the way in which these components are used. The critic must not only be sensitive to the degree of meaning potential within a work he criticizes, he must simultaneously be aware of the "amount" of interacting, significant elements out of which values may be realized.

Mr. Schramm's article, which dealt also with John Dos Passos, and Thomas Wolfe, was certainly not a complete review of either Steinbeck's past work, or the novel then reviewed: The Grapes of Wrath.

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<sup>6</sup> Cf. Joseph Warren Beach, op. cit., p. 334.





Maxwell Geismar: the historical viewpoint. Mr.

Geismar's critical review of John Steinbeck's works appears in his Writers in Crisis,<sup>7</sup> a book subtitled, "The American Novel: 1925-1940," and which is concerned with six novelists of that period. Chapter Six, which deals with John Steinbeck, is headed, "John Steinbeck: Of Wrath or Joy."

Mr. Geismar calls Steinbeck an "...impassioned radical who exploited the ruling classes, who introduced the proletariat to a multitude of model homes, and brought Marx to Hoover's doorstep."<sup>8</sup> He has decided that Steinbeck is a Party writer, following the Communist line, without necessarily being a Communist Party member. But aside from that predetermined judgement, Geismar's criticism is an excellent example of historical-minded criticism. His examination is chronological. He seeks to trace the various elements of Steinbeck's writings from their beginnings to The Grapes of Wrath. He points out the growing maturity of Steinbeck's writing, its causes (as closely as he can determine them), and the varying themes which have concerned Steinbeck in his gradual development towards a social awareness.

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<sup>7</sup> Boston: Houghton, Mifflin Company, 1942.

<sup>8</sup> Ibid., p. 241.



However, Mr. Geismar's underlying thesis in Writers in Crisis is that the six writers most indicative of the period were, like the period, affected by change and crisis. From Ring Lardner, in the pre-'29 years, to the social consciousness that affected the work of the writers of the depression years, the era was one of economic and social instability. The growth of a social consciousness is a trait common to all six writers, avers Mr. Geismar. It is important to keep in mind that Geismar is greatly concerned with this element of social conscious in a writer, and that this focus affects his criticism.

Geismar seems certain he has located the underlying theme which is constant in all of Steinbeck's work. In writing of The Pastures of Heaven, Steinbeck's second novel, Geismar says:

...With all of its human ramifications the novel becomes the dramatic projection of a single basic question: Dwelling in these green pastures of the world, humanity, which as the young Steinbeck views it is potentially good, finds itself constantly thwarted, its little visions of peace endlessly crushed. What is, then, the curse which defeats us?...

The significance of this question is apparent when we realize that the subsequent novels of Steinbeck are an attempt, at least in part, and however imperfect, to answer the dilemma of 'The Pastures.'<sup>9</sup>

In Cup of Gold, and To a God Unknown, Geismar implies

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<sup>9</sup> Ibid., p. 244.



that we may see the effect of the culture upon the artist. "Steinbeck," he says, "has this early [1933] discarded the egocentric individualism of Lardner's age for the identification...of the individual with his world..."<sup>10</sup>

After an outline of the theme and elements to To a God Unknown, Geismar writes:

It's interesting that such dallying with the primitive and the occult, as in the time of Mesmer, occurs most sharply before social cataclysms, as if men, confronted with extreme demands upon their mature intelligence, fall back upon the instincts of their infancy.<sup>11</sup>

Constantly, in his criticism, Geismar is influenced by the "historical-mindedness" of his critical standards, which of course, reflect his artistic standards and are a result of his philosophic perspective. His approach to critical evaluation is historical. He attempts to relate the elements he finds in all of Steinbeck's works with social conditions prevalent at the time of the writing of the work under consideration. This attitude, that whatever is said or written must have been said or written in some certain social or cultural milieu with its own particular values, is the focus of Geismar's criticism. It is an attempt to relate the values of the novel with the values of a particular era.

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<sup>10</sup> Ibid., p. 251.

<sup>11</sup> Ibid., p. 250.



1. The first part of the paper discusses the importance of the study of the history of the English language. It is a branch of linguistics which deals with the changes in the language over time and space. The study of the history of the English language is important for several reasons. First, it helps us to understand the development of the language and the factors which have influenced it. Second, it helps us to understand the relationship between the English language and other languages. Third, it helps us to understand the cultural and social context in which the language has developed.

2. The second part of the paper discusses the history of the English language from its origins to the present. It begins with the prehistoric period, when the English language was first spoken by the Anglo-Saxons. It then discusses the Old English period, the Middle English period, and the Modern English period. It also discusses the influence of other languages on the English language, such as Latin, French, and Greek.

3. The third part of the paper discusses the history of the English language in the United States. It begins with the early period, when the English language was first spoken in the United States. It then discusses the development of the American English dialect, which is a distinct dialect of the English language. It also discusses the influence of other languages on American English, such as Spanish, French, and Italian.

4. The fourth part of the paper discusses the history of the English language in the world. It begins with the early period, when the English language was first spoken in the world. It then discusses the development of the English language in different parts of the world, such as India, Africa, and Australia. It also discusses the influence of other languages on the English language in different parts of the world.

5. The fifth part of the paper discusses the future of the English language. It discusses the factors which will influence the development of the English language in the future, such as globalization, technology, and immigration. It also discusses the role of the English language in the world in the future.

6. The sixth part of the paper discusses the importance of the study of the history of the English language. It discusses the factors which make the study of the history of the English language important, such as the development of the language, the relationship between the English language and other languages, and the cultural and social context in which the language has developed.

7. The seventh part of the paper discusses the conclusion of the study. It discusses the main findings of the study and the implications of the study. It also discusses the limitations of the study and the areas for further research.

8. The eighth part of the paper discusses the bibliography of the study. It lists the books, articles, and other sources which have been used in the study.

9. The ninth part of the paper discusses the index of the study. It lists the topics and pages which are covered in the study.

The period of crisis--1925-1940--produced writers whose work is influenced by a concern for the elements of tension and stress affecting the civilization in which they lived, asserts Geismar, and his criticism implies that a consideration of the influence of Zeitgeist upon the author is important. Those elements which are major in the work of an important author may be observed throughout all of his novels. The development of these themes throughout the continuity of his work is a clue to the growing maturity of the author, and thus, any critical evaluation--in order to be valid--must examine his early works for those elements to be found also in his more mature writings. These are some of the principles of Geismar's critical standards. He writes:

...We cannot, moreover, scrutinize these early novels too sharply, for their worst excrescences of fancy share an appealing sort of excitement, a sense of discovery which, however, indiscriminate, shields them. Steinbeck's dabbings with the mystic, his researches into primitive rites, his concern for pathology, all have about them such an air of...wonder.<sup>12</sup>

It is interesting to note that these elements which Geismar discovers to be only in the early Steinbeck have reappeared--if they have been at all missing--in the last two of Steinbeck's novels, published since Geismar's book

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<sup>12</sup> Ibid., p. 251.



was written: The Pearl (1947) and The Wayward Bus, (1947). In addition, an examination of Sea of Cortez (1941) will also show a preoccupation with primitive rites, the concern for the mystic and for pathology, and which is written with such "an air of...wonder."

Geismar, too, finds violence to be an element prevalent in Steinbeck's writings:

...It seems that violence in itself has an inherent fascination for Steinbeck...and this violence is used for effect more often than edification.<sup>13</sup>

Tracing the development of Steinbeck as an author, Geismar examines Tortilla Flat and finds it a necessary, logical step toward the maturity of Steinbeck as a socially conscious writer. A concern for violence is not the only element constantly recurrent in Steinbeck's work. Geismar finds in Cup of Gold (Steinbeck's first published novel, about Sir Henry Morgan, pirate), in Pastures of Heaven, and To a God Unknown, that an opposition to the restraints of society is another recurrent Steinbeckian element:

In his concern with his new 'secret' of violence, however, what has happened to Steinbeck's 'curse'? What is the source of human frustration? Morgan in his piratical power urges, Joseph in his mystic renunciation, had each sought the good life in diverse ways. But there was a common denominator to these apparently opposite concepts. In the course of Steinbeck's early explorations, the basic problem has become more sharply defined. The source of our troubles

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<sup>13</sup> Ibid. p. 250.





is modern civilization. In his return to the past, in the advocacy first of the lawless adventurer, and then of the pagan seeker who renounces his culture, Steinbeck makes clear his opposition to the restraints of society.... Steinbeck was now to define his thesis in new terms, express his defiance and opposition to society in new forms. Close to his hands were the paisanos of California, ignorant, lazy, obviously 'immoral,' childlike, starving, slovenly, lacking, in short, all the marks of American progress and obviously very happy.

...these paisanos--were certainly and exactly the protagonists of the good life Steinbeck had been seeking. In the sequence of his quest 'Tortilla Flat' is inevitable.<sup>14</sup>

The italicized words should be subjected to a semantic scrutiny. Does Steinbeck really "make clear his opposition to the restraints of society," or is it Geismar who does so for him? "Defiance" is connotative of a biased judgement. Has Geismar's seeking for elements in Steinbeck to justify his thesis that Steinbeck is a writer with social consciousness pre-determined Geismar's critical judgement? Notice the emphasis that Geismar places on sociological import in the novel:

...wherever, indeed, there is opportunity in 'Tortilla Flat' for more serious social appraisal, Steinbeck avoids reflection by the use of an intellectual conceit. Just as he might have deepened his book by the illumination of the positive human values in the paisano society, as compared with our own, he again ignores the more realistic significance of the paisano existence. His folk epic becomes rather too strongly a fantasy.<sup>15</sup>

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<sup>14</sup> Ibid., p. 252. Italics not in original.

<sup>15</sup> Loc. cit. Italics not in original.





Professor Geismar's search for social significance has caused him to overlook the fact that Steinbeck himself intended Tortilla Flat as more a fantasy than a folk tale with social significance--although it might (and does) contain many social values. Geismar's criticism was written, one may assume, sometime around 1941 (the publication date is 1942) and it was criticism similar to this that caused Steinbeck earlier to write the following letter to his agents:

The book Tortilla Flat has a definite theme. I thought it was clear enough. I had expected that the plan of the Arthurian cycle would be recognized. Even the incident of the Sangreal in the search of the forest is not clear enough, I guess. The form is that of the Mallory version--the coming of Arthur, and the mystic quality of owning a house, the forming of the Round Table, the adventures of the knights and finally, the mystic translation of Danny. The main issue was to present a little known and to me delightful people.

Is not this cycle or story or theme enough? Perhaps it is not enough because I have not made it clear enough. Then I must make it clearer. What do you think of putting in an interlocutor, who between each incident interprets the incident, morally, aesthetically, historically, but in the manner of the paisanos themselves? This would give the book much the appeal of the Gesta Romanorum, those outrageous tales with monkish morals appended, or of the Song of Solomon in the King James version, with the delightful chapter headings which go to prove the Shulamite is in reality Christ's Church. It would not be as sharp as this, of course. But the little dialogue would at least make clear the form of the book, its tragi-comic theme, and the different philosophic-moral system of these people.

A cycle is there. You will remember that the association forms, flowers and dies. Far from having a hard theme running through the book, one of the intents is to show that rarely does anything in the lives of these



people survive the night.<sup>16</sup>

This letter was written in 1934 by Steinbeck as a result of the complete failure of critics to understand what he was attempting in the form of Tortilla Flat. It is surprising that seven years later critics were making the same mistakes.

Professor Geismar's search for social values has caused him to point out what to him is the weakness of Tortilla Flat. Since values are indicative of a philosophy, particular values outline a particular philosophy. Here one may see that Geismar is concerned with the social significance of literature. He examines the novel in the light of critical standards which have, as major criteria, the "illumination of positive human values in society." His evaluation of Steinbeck is valid only in the light of his philosophy which determines his standards. To whatever degree of the critic's philosophy differs from that of the artist is the degree of difference between the critical standards used to evaluate the work and the artistic standards in the light of which the work was created. This difference may not exist at all; it may exist to such an extent that a critical examination becomes futile and its results completely invalid.

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<sup>16</sup> Cited by Lewis Gannett, "John Steinbeck: Novelist at Work," The Atlantic Monthly, December, 1945.



Unless critical activity is completely <sup>b</sup>objective in its first approach to the work in question--that is, unless the evaluation is non-judgemental until the work has been examined, the artistic perspective of the artist determined, and the degree to which the work approaches the artist's aims evaluated--then critical activity is no more than a rationalization of a subjective judgement. The critic's function is one of interpretation and discovery. It is for him to find the values in an artist's work. If these values are existent in another (and different) philosophic area than his own, the critic should make this clear. It is important for the critic to make known to his audience both his own critical standards, and the artistic standards (which are an implicit part of the work in question) of the artist. The critic is to place works within an area where definite standards of the value exist, not merely to judge them "good" or "bad" on his own standards alone, without making known what his standards are.<sup>17</sup>

Geismar's next statement is important because of what it reveals about his standards:

Yet if our author is trapped by a sentimental concept of poverty, through it he has begun to introduce

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<sup>17</sup> See Bernard C. Heyl, New Bearings in Esthetics and Art Criticism, for a discussion of subjectivism vs. objectivism in art criticism, and for an excellent outline of the relativist position in art criticism.





himself to a new world....In order to gain sympathy for man's suffering we must generally delude ourselves as to its nature. We act through illusion in order to act at all. However eccentric Steinbeck's view of the dispossessed in 'Tortilla Flat' if its origins are dubious and its qualities inaccurate, here for the first time he has related himself, not with a mystic or piratical life of the past, but with the more immediate social issues of his own world. The importance of 'Tortilla Flat' in Steinbeck's evolution as a characteristic American writer cannot be minimized.<sup>18</sup>

The italicized portion of the above quotation is an important indication of Geismar's own philosophical beliefs. From what has already been shown to be Steinbeck's philosophical perspective, delusion as to the nature of a thing is in violent disagreement with Steinbeck's philosophy. The only question then is this: Did Steinbeck have a completely integrated philosophy of phyletic humanism when he wrote Tortilla Flat and was it the same philosophy expressed so clearly and definitely in Sea of Cortez?

Continuing, Professor Geismar writes:

Very much like the despairing mad orgy of Danny, 'Tortilla Flat' may be seen as Steinbeck's last pagan excursion before he too assumed the responsibilities of his craft in an age of crisis. For the good life of 'Tortilla Flat' was ultimately as inadequate as the answers of his earlier books. Liberty is a larger concept than the mere evasion of civilizational restraints. At certain periods of history we are forced to make our freedom, rather than relax in it. And though Steinbeck might revert at times to the themes of his young novels, his direction after 'Tortilla Flat' was fundamentally changed....If the pressing social problems of his time, like poor Danny's hats, would

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<sup>18</sup> Op. cit., pp. 254-55. Italics not in original.



henceforth cast a blight on Steinbeck's free life, he must nevertheless dwell in them.<sup>19</sup>

This much, taken at face value, appears to be so. Yet an investigation of all of Steinbeck's works shows that each novel Steinbeck wrote seems to be in a different "direction." Professor Geismar's implication that Steinbeck "fundamentally changed" the direction of his writing after Tortilla Flat because of a suddenly awakened social consciousness is highly controversial.

Geismar's criticism of In Dubious Battle is focused on his assumption that Steinbeck's tendencies toward certain elements are the framework of the novel. "Mac," states Geismar, "is simply another of Steinbeck's brave new natural men, brother to the muleskinner, Slim, of 'Of Mice and Men.'"<sup>20</sup> He points out that Steinbeck's "familiar passion for big theatrical scenes" leads to an episode which strains the reader's credulity: Mac, without any obstetrical knowledge delivers a baby to the wife of a striker. He reiterates his previous claim that the element of violence is basic in Steinbeck's writings. Yet, nowhere does Geismar sense the philosophy behind In Dubious Battle. He sees only the obvious Communism of Mac who is "in the tradition of Steinbeck's natural supermen," without realizing

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<sup>19</sup> Ibid., pp. 255-56. Italics not in original.

<sup>20</sup> Ibid., p. 261.



that Doc is the one who symbolized (if he does not declare outright) the philosophy of John Steinbeck.<sup>21</sup>

"The Rousseauistic Eden of Steinbeck's early novels has become Marx's Utopia..." declares Geismar.<sup>22</sup>

The summation of In Dubious Battle by Geismar is as follows:

Representing as I think it does, the victory of Steinbeck's repressed realism over the romantic serenity which he has hitherto assumed as his tone, it makes us aware...of his undeveloped powers. For this master of illusion has presented a sort of masterpiece of disillusionment.<sup>23</sup>

This is as close as Geismar comes to sensing the artistic symbolism which is so important an element in everything Steinbeck ever wrote. Geismar sees this artistry only as "romantic serenity," never aware of the artistic significance of Steinbeck's symbolism.

The historical-mindedness of Professor Geismar's criticism may be seen by the statement he made concerning The Grapes of Wrath: "...we attempt to view it here as a writer's work, and as the present climax of Steinbeck's history."<sup>24</sup>

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<sup>21</sup> Cf. ante, Chap. Five, the long quotation from In Dubious Battle.

<sup>22</sup> Op. cit., p. 261.

<sup>23</sup> Ibid., pp. 262-63.

<sup>24</sup> Ibid., 263.





This historical attitude leads him to make the following statement:

In this sense, knowing what we do of the earlier Steinbeck, it must become clear how much of Steinbeck's famous novel is borrowed from the past, how many of the characters and themes in 'The Grapes of Wrath' are reflections of Steinbeck's younger interests, and of the uneven temperament we have already seen functioning.<sup>25</sup>

He continues:

The inequalities of the American social system are affecting thousands of fine American families. Hence the Joads must be a fine American family. Around them Steinbeck weaves his typical fantasies, so that the Joads emerge as idealized in their own way as those smooth personages who dwell everlastingly in the pages of the Saturday Evening Post. Of them, of course, Ma Joad is the guiding spirit, the soul of American motherhood, her home in the kitchen but her spirit in the heavens. Like Slim and Mac she is wise, courageous, indomitable, though in tatters.<sup>26</sup>

Unfortunately, Professor Geismar's determination to show The Grapes of Wrath as a sociological novel has prevented him from realizing or sensing the symbolism of the novel. He cannot (at least he does not) see that Ma Joad is a symbol, that Casy and Tom and Rosasharn are symbols, that all of the Joads are symbolic characters:

It's hard to believe [writes Geismar] that even Steinbeck himself accepts the Joads as people or that he has thrown in the variety of earthy violent concepts for more than their picturesque value.<sup>27</sup>

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<sup>25</sup> Loc. cit.

<sup>26</sup> Ibid., p. 264.

<sup>27</sup> Loc. cit.



His determination to find elements in Steinbeck's writings to support his thesis that the most representative American writers have found "social injustice" as a central theme for their novels, and that without this social awakening a novelist is a "mystic," "primitive," "symbolist," or "experimentalist," leads Geismar to make the three following statements: (The italicized portions are so indicative of Geismar's critical drive that they are a clear declaration of his critical standards.)

For...we cannot deny the force and sincerity of the novel. [The Grapes of Wrath] which break through the moulds of its presentation. The descriptions of the migration, of the highway caravans, of the used car markets, of truck-drivers and roadside stands, the geographical panorama of the Western states, the evocation of their socio-psychological temper, and those of the strain of industrial conflict, the repeated affirmation of faith and respect in average humanity, the anger at social injustice, and above all, the novel's will for life coming in an era of sickness and death--these again and again capture us and arouse us...Before the significance of the book in Steinbeck's own history, and in the history of his society, before the power of it, rough as it may be, we must yield up our reservations to our praise. Lacking the art of 'The Pastures of Heaven' and the realism of 'In Dubious Battle', marking, as it also does, a return to Steinbeck's glamor, theatrics, and simplicity of view after the conflicts of his earlier proletarian novel, thus sentimentalized, often distorted, 'The Grapes of Wrath' is not at all Steinbeck's best novel. But it is, all in all, his biggest novel.<sup>28</sup>

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<sup>28</sup> Ibid., p. 265.





...The Steinbeck who sought in 'The Pastures of Heaven' the causes of human frustration finds its true origin in the social pathology of an economic system both incoherent and inexcusable...Having come to realize, however, that our true happiness must derive, not through any mystical and mythical freedom from society, but through making our society genuinely free, Steinbeck's extremes become a virtue, and the grace of his final truth redeems his methodological errors.<sup>29</sup>

...in his conversion, Steinbeck again illustrates another era of American artistic thought. Through the errors, which mark his first attempts at dealing with his own day, his lack of sociological knowledge, the haste with which he dropped a point of view essentially naive, and the naivete which nevertheless accompanies his new views also, here again Steinbeck reflects the American writer in crisis. Notice the swift embracing of revolutionary violence in 'In Dubious Battle,' a solution paralleling that of a score of other typical artists, as though by the extremity of our feelings we may excuse its tardiness.<sup>30</sup>

In the paragraph immediately preceding the one last cited, Geismar states the importance of his consideration of Steinbeck, and the importance of Steinbeck's coming "of age" in this manner:

And the importance of this lies not only, of course, with Steinbeck as an individual, but in his relationship with an entire range of American artists and with our culture itself...In him are reflected the evasions of his generation. Avoiding the most flagrant of these evasions, and from the first always more American in tone, Steinbeck seems to speak nevertheless for all his fellow individualists, mystics and primitives, symbolists and experimentalists...<sup>31</sup>

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<sup>29</sup> Ibid., pp. 265-66.

<sup>30</sup> Ibid., p. 267.

<sup>31</sup> Ibid., pp. 266-67.





The failure of Geismar to establish the relationship of Steinbeck with the civilization he writes of is due to ideatic blockages resultant from the artistic standards Geismar bases his critical standards upon, and which, in turn, limit his critical validity.

George Stevens: the human values. Stevens is in disagreement with Geismar on several points as to the values in Steinbeck's works; on others, he is in accord with him. For example, Stevens, unlike Geismar, believes that Steinbeck is a conscious artist who has always been fully aware of what he has been doing. As Stevens states, in a review of The Grapes of Wrath:

It is exciting to watch the steady unfolding of a real writer's talents, to follow his development from promise to achievement, with the sense that he knows what he wants and knows what he is doing.<sup>32</sup>

He is aware of the constancy in Steinbeck's works, whereas Geismar sought (and found to his own satisfaction) a point of change in Steinbeck's career. While Stevens realizes the differences between one Steinbeck novel and another, he is aware that they are held together by more than just the bond of being written by the same author:

Different as these novels are (and Steinbeck's variety is further manifested in the stories in 'The Long

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<sup>32</sup> "Steinbeck's Uncovered Wagon," Saturday Review of Literature, 19:3-4, April 15, 1939. All quotations from Stevens are from the same source. No italics are in original, all have been added.



Valley'), there has been a constancy of flavor which is impossible to define: something deeper than the 'personality' of the author, which never intrudes; something more impalpable than 'ideas'; something in the style, but in a style of which one is almost never conscious.

Although Stevens is conscious of the fact that there is a common "something" to all of Steinbeck's novels he is not able to recognize nor define it. He comes close to a conscious recognition when, in writing of The Grapes of Wrath, he states:

...Here is the epitome of everything Steinbeck has so far given us. It has the humor and earthiness of 'Tortilla Flat,' the social consciousness of 'In Dubious Battle,' the passionate concern for the homeless and uprooted which made 'Of Mice and Men' memorable. These elements, together with a narrative that moves with excitement for its own sake, are not mixed, but fused, to produce the unique quality of 'The Grapes of Wrath.' That quality is an understanding of courage--courage seen with humor and bitterness and without a trace of sentimentality; courage that exists as the last affirmation of human dignity. To convey that understanding with passionate conviction, in human terms and also in terms of mature intelligence, so that we respond integrally and without reservation, is a very considerable thing for a novel to do.

Here again, in the writings of a critic we find his unvoiced criteria: 1) "a narrative that moves with excitement for its own sake"; 2) how well the narrative conveys ("with passionate conviction, in human terms and also in terms of mature intelligence") that which the artist has apprehended and understood; and, 3) that there must be a response by the reader in at least some degree and intensity.



Stevens shows by implication what he considers to be the difference between a poet and a novelist:

With this material Steinbeck has done what, according to at least one theory, cannot be done: he has made a living novel out of the news in the paper, out of contemporary social conditions. In "Land of the Free," Archibald MacLeish wrote a sound track to the Resettlement Administration's documentary stills. He looked at the pictures of the plowed-under farmers and wrote a poet's abstract statement, pared down to gaunt monosyllables, of a seemingly insoluble problem. Steinbeck has looked at the Oklahoma farmers themselves--...What he has written about them is a narrative: colorful, dramatic, subtle, coarse, comic, and tragic. For "The Grapes of Wrath" is not a social novel like most social novels. It is instead what a social novel ought to be. When you read it, you are in contact not with arguments, but with people.

Steinbeck, says Stevens: "...has looked at the Oklahoma farmers themselves..." implying that an experiential reference and validity are necessary to a novelist. His emphasis is on human values and not on abstractions at several removes from these human values. Here, of course, is where sentiment is created. A modern author is concerned primarily with emotions to the exclusion, almost, of everything else: he writes of the emotional reactions of his characters to a given situation so as to stimulate an emotional response in the reader.

Emotion is the concern of the artist; through it he arouses in the appreciator a state of receptivity to the particular intellectual values his work of art conveys. Emotion, however, is a tool toward the achievement of an





end of greater value than a mere emotional state. The emotion described by the artist is never the same emotion he wishes to arouse in the appreciator. The relation of emotion:described to emotion:felt is a definite one, which depends for its functioning upon elements of educational, cultural, and environmental Zeitgeist in influencing the viewpoint of the appreciator toward a pre-determined emotional state. It is in this emotional state that the sensitivity of the reader is at its greatest to the semantic import in the work of art.

That this emotion:described is implied through the actions of the characters in a novel is understood. The comment by Collingwood cited earlier is particularly apropos here: "A genuine poet, in his moments of genuine poetry, never mentions by name the emotions he is expressing."<sup>33</sup>

Stevens' concern is for the importance of the human being. He finds in The Grapes of Wrath that the supreme human values are man's courage and comradeship in adversity:

From all their wanderings the Joads learn one thing: that the only people who will help them are others as down and out as themselves. It is out of this comradeship among the hopeless that courage is kept alive-- the courage that is their last possession. In its

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<sup>33</sup> Principles of Art, p. 112.



affirmation of man's courage in desperation lie the human significance and value of "The Grapes of Wrath."

It may be seen that Stevens looks for value in the novel: a value not primarily dependent upon social values (Whipple) or upon the representativity of the artist of his cultural era (Geismar). As Stevens writes:

Others will see in it a different and more immediately sociological value. Unquestionably "The Grapes of Wrath" states the problem of the southwestern tenant farmer in a form that will bring it home to the imaginations of thousands who have hitherto looked upon it with comparative unconcern. Unquestionably, also, Steinbeck sees his material both as narrative and as a condition calling for action.

Stevens, however, cannot see the symbolism of The Grapes of Wrath, a symbolism so great that the entire novel is one of organic symbolism. Even a chapter as flagrantly symbolic as that concerning the turtle (and its compulsion to go on its way, carrying with it the seeds of life) Stevens sees merely as "stating the problem in terms of pure non-fiction." His own words on the subject are:

At regular intervals in the book he inserts general chapters stating the problem in terms of pure non-fiction. For my own part, I found these chapters at best superfluous, occasionally sententious, and in one instance downright bad (this is a very windy passage indeed, in which the author coins the word "Manself," but which I hope no one will ever use again). It is not these chapters, but the story of the loads that makes you want to do something about the migratory tenant farmers.

The italicized portion indicates a belief that a novel of value stirs the reader to action. Stevens does

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not say whether this action may be intellectual action,  
or whether it must be physical action, the result which is  
to change a social condition.





## CHAPTER EIGHT

### CRITICISM AND CRITICAL TECHNIQUES

The reviews and critical evaluations of five critics of Steinbeck's works have been presented and contrasted with an evaluation of The Grapes of Wrath, and a summation of Steinbeck's position as a novelist as determined by an examination into his works. These particular five critics have not been especially chosen. Accidentally, they have fallen into distinct classifications according to the focus of their critical standards. Any additional number of critics could have been examined and the results would probably have been the same, with, perhaps, several of the critics falling into similar groups.

It is not the purpose of this thesis to judge any of these critics as "right" and others "wrong"; nor is it the purpose of this thesis to defend the novels of John Steinbeck on any scale of values. The object has been to point out how critical standards of reputable critics are subject to their philosophic perspectives, and to show how these standards so affect the critics that their criticism is oriented only toward certain areas. The corollary of this statement is: Evaluations by critics are valid only as the critic is sensitive toward, and apperceptive to, the values that may exist in the work under examination, this



sensitivity being determined by his previous critical concerns, his philosophic and artistic perspectives, and his literary and esthetic backgrounds as determined and affected by the culture in which he lives.

In the examples of critical evaluation already discussed perhaps the most obvious generality is that these reviews are as diverse in their evaluations as are the views of the critics they represent. Yet this is not enough to account for the widely different values seen in the works examined. Henri Focillon has observed: "The critic will define a work of art by following the needs of his own individual nature and the particular objectives of his research."<sup>1</sup> Certainly, the criticism has differed as the "individual nature" of the critic "and the particular objectives of his research" differed. Each of the critics sought some particular values in Steinbeck's novels, and finding, or not finding, these values was the basis of the critical estimate given.

Not only did these critics--and others<sup>2</sup>--seek different values, they sought them with different critical standards, and with different critical terminology in expressing their evaluations; terminology that, in many

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<sup>1</sup> The Life of Forms in Art, cited by Bernard C. Heyl, New Bearings in Esthetics and Art Criticism, p. 13.

<sup>2</sup> Cf. bibliography, under articles.



cases, differed, although the criteria may have been the same. This latter has made increasingly difficult an understanding between the critic and the reader. It is a prime fault in contemporary criticism that terminology is too often misleading to the reader, setting up for him abstractions which are never defined, and which connote for the reader personal and often-times different meanings than the one intended by the critic. A recognition of the meaning of critical terms cannot, therefore, be based on usage alone because these terms have multi-meanings already, and the meanings are further constantly changing to a greater or less degree. Since terms like "naturalism," "realism," "social values," "humanism," etc., are not only indicative of the form of the material and the pattern of selection of detail expressed by the author, but are also connotative of approbational values (dependent upon the philosophy of the critic who uses them) it is important that terms be considered as having multi-meanings, and that no attempt be made to set a meaning for a term until that meaning is determined either directly by a declaration of standards by the critic, or by the context in which the term appears.

It is oftentimes only by a determination of the connotational import of their critical terms that the critical standards of many critics can be found. Since this





adds another burden to those already carried by the careful and discriminate reader, it almost invalidates the purpose of criticism: to find the values of a work of art, and finding them, point them out (by a sensitization of the reader's faculties) for the reader who is not as acute as either critic or artist. The critic's function is to stimulate the sensitivity of the reader to certain areas wherein the import of the work of art becomes evident, so that the reader may become aware of the conveyed values for himself. This function is carried out to fulfillment as the degree of the critic's sensitivity varies. The sensitive reader is always his own critic.

The reader, then, is entitled to know in advance the critical standards of the critic so that he may understand what values are being sought, and how they are being sought, and upon what scale--if any--they are being measured.

Practically all previous criticism has been limited to one of three phases: art-artistry, the artist, or the work of art. In the first case, the critic is concerned with the question: How closely does this work approach art? The problems that arise for the reader, then, is to determine what concept the critic has of "art," and what, to the critic, determines a work of art.



Secondly, there is the group of critics who focus upon the biographical details of the artist and who are concerned with the relation of the work in question with the life of the artist. The third group concern themselves with the work of art (object of art) and are concerned with the critical problem of examining an art object out of relation to its maker, time of creation, or other factors that enter into the totality of a work-or-art process. This is the critical school bent on examining a work of art in isolation.

Each of these groups, according to the Modern Climate of Opinion, is concerned with only one phase (or perhaps several phases) of the total problem, for, if the work of art is a totality of artist, object of art and appreciator, any valid examination must, of necessity, be concerned with all of these phases, and the interaction between them.

Another accusation leveled against contemporary criticism is that most reviews avoid the responsibility of evaluating. As a result there are two kinds of art-reviews: the enjoyment-review, and the evaluative review. The only comment necessary to deal with the first sort of review has been made by R. G. Collingwood when he wrote: "So long as art is identified with amusement, criticism is



impossible."<sup>3</sup> The evaluative review, then, is correlative with art on a higher level than that of mere enjoyment.<sup>4</sup>

It has been previously stated that any use of language that stimulates in others a realization of the significance of life is called literature, which is an art form. This construct of the abstraction "literature" is, it must be understood, emergent from the philosophy of the Modern Climate of Opinion. This construct answers the question: What does literature do?

Literature is that use of language as an art form. It is a stimulation of artistic realizations in the appreciator when so used. The assumption, then, is that art is not something to examine but to experience.

Here, an almost entirely new concept of criticism is in the process of evolving. Previously, criticism concerned itself with examination, now criticism is focusing upon experiential values.

Literary criticism may be either critical evaluation, or a critical interpretation, which of necessity includes

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<sup>3</sup> The Principles of Art, p. 91.

<sup>4</sup> When enjoyment is omitted from literary experience it is only because it has already stimulated toward a higher level of realization. The authentic level (the participative level on which occurs the artist-appreciator sharing) is that in which the work of art becomes meaningful and thus becomes literature.





an evaluative aspect. In the case of the former, criticism has been bound to judgement. These judgements, however, are not necessarily made on a scale of absolute values; the scale may be relative.

Art as a function. In order to set up criteria for the evaluation of literature, it is first necessary to determine what one considers the function of literature to be. In the assumption that literature has a function appears the basic difference between a criticism emergent from the Modern Climate of Opinion and traditional criticism.

American art, for example, however much influenced in a historical sense by a European culture transplanted to this country is still a resultant from the particular environmental effect upon a civilization so much in the process of change and development that it did not finish its gestative stage until the last fifty years. In a report presented to the American Historical Association in 1893, Frederick Jackson Turner stated:

The peculiarity of American institutions is, the fact that they have been compelled to adapt themselves to the changes of an expanding people--to the changes involved in crossing a continent, in winning a wilderness, and in developing at each area of this progress out of the primitive economic and political conditions of the frontier into the complexity of city life...This perennial rebirth, this fluidity of American life, this expansion Westward with its new opportunities, its continuous touch with the simplicity of primitive society, furnish the forces dominating American character...



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...Moving westward, the frontier became more and more American. As successive terminal moraines result from successive glaciations, so each frontier leaves its traces behind it, and when it becomes a settled area the region still partakes of the frontier characteristics. Thus the advance of the frontier has meant a steady movement away from the influence of Europe, a steady growth of independence on American lines.<sup>5</sup>

The emphasis is thus upon American art because the interacting effect of civilization upon literature, and literature upon civilization has produced a peculiarly native American culture, which is only faintly related to European culture despite continued attempts to merge them.

The same is true of the art of any country; of art produced by any artist. The critic must take into consideration the influences at work on the artist that condition him to think in a certain pattern, and the influences that result in the object of art being created in a particular form and manner. Literature, emergent as it is from a particular civilization and culture, must have a criticism which is cognizant of these factors, a criticism which examines a literary work in the light of its several interacting and interrelated backgrounds. This criticism must be aware of the psychology of the artist, of the processes

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<sup>5</sup> "The Significance of the Frontier in American History," American Life in Literature, Jay B. Hubbell, ed., II, 114-15.

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of a work of art, of the function and meaningfulness of literature, and of its own limitations and lack of knowledge--a criticism, which, in short, may be termed gestalt criticism, taking into consideration every factor of any influence upon the creation, criticism and appreciation of a work of art.

Criticism emergent from the Modern Climate of Opinion bases its evaluation on experiential standards. The degree to which literature contributes to a culture is the measure of its value. The function of art is to contribute to the culture in which it exists. Art does not come to a conclusion; its contribution lies in the degree to which it points up the constellated patterns of discovered elements of meaning in experience. Literature is functional in that it stimulates the reader to an awareness of values that lie in experience, values that are never a part of a literary work but are conveyed by that work. The focus is on life, with art as a part of life, and not on a dichotomy between the two. The test for values obtained through a work of art experience and made part of the appreciator's developing intellectual faculty is what it can do in subsequent experience to clarify human relations. Thus it is that modern literature cannot be judged by standards applied to traditional literature, for modern literature (by which is meant literature emergent from the





philosophic area of the Modern Climate of Opinion) has a different function.

It is in understanding the area in which a literature exists and with which it concerns itself, and of the values of that area that gestalt criticism is focused. The understanding of existent fields of literary foci enables the gestalt critic to place the literary work under consideration in its rightful area, and to determine--using the standards of that literary area only as a measurement for placement--by means of the critical principles being here outlined the particular values (as a work of art) of the literary work under examination. This, of course, is predicated upon the belief that the gestalt critic has a literary experience wide enough to be fully aware of the criteria and standards of each of the literary "schools" that are, and have been, in existence, in addition to a knowledge of the philosophies out of which these schools have emerged, and their correlative philosophies of esthetics and criticism.

Literature, as considered by the Modern Climate of opinion, is a participative experience. The quality of the experience undergone in the reading of a literary work is dependent upon the degree of author-appreciator sharing, and the degree of sensitivity of both, and in the degree of importance of the ideational values conveyed from one to



the other. A work of art can be evaluated in the three areas thus outlined, and upon a fourth: the esthetic experience.

It is not the purpose of this thesis to construct an elaborate defense of the term "esthetic" with its connotation as derived from the Modern Climate of Opinion. As used here, the term has to do with modern functional esthetics: the artist, whose sensitivity to the meanings of experience is more acute than others, senses the relationships in experience, relationships that clarify the meaning of life. The esthetic sense, then, is the ability to constellate experience-patterns; the esthetic experience is the psychological experience--intellectual and emotional--undergone in the process of constellating the patterns of relational values. The esthetic experience is partially an emotional state aroused by its particular stimuli, partly an intellectual realization, which is the result of stimuli produced by the particular esthetic:emotional feeling already induced. The quality of the esthetic experience has posed a problem too lengthy to outline here. However, the esthetic experience is a necessary part of the work-of-art process, inasmuch as it induces a more acute intellectual response to the significance of the values conveyed by the object of art in the work-of-art process.



## CHAPTER NINE

### GESTALT CRITICISM

Basically, gestalt criticism is criticism that is cognizant of the totality of organic unity and functioning of a work of art, and while concerned with an analysis of that work of art, is concerned to a greater extent with the work of art in relation to its interaction with life. It may be termed an ecological consideration of literature, in one sense, yet the ecology of a literary work is only one of the multiplicity of elements involved in an interpretative evaluation of that work. As all theory of gestalten is a non-summative consideration of organic unity (the sum of the elements of an organism plus X, with X standing for the quality resultant from the interaction of these elements to produce the unique action of the organism as an individual), so too is gestalt criticism.

It has already been observed how the particular philosophy of the individual critic has led him to make critical judgements which have not taken into consideration all the value-aspects of the work under consideration. It has been pointed out that this is the result of a blockage caused by the philosophic perspective of the critic, which in turn determines his critical position and the critical standards he uses to evaluate works of literary content.





The gestalt critic is not primarily concerned with criticisms of judgement; rather, he is concerned with criticism-as-analysis, and with critical synthesis. The procedure used by the gestalt critic is as follows:

A placement of the work in question in a certain historically determined area is the primary result of his examination, although not the most important. By this, the critic determines whether the literary work belongs to a particular school of writing. Here, an historical knowledge of literature is necessary.

Using the elements that determine the boundaries of that school, the critic places the work in question within the framework of the already determined literary school. So far, the progress of the critic may be measured by the compound question: To what school does this writing belong, and of what temporal period is it closest in relation? In other words, is the piece under consideration classical, romantic, impressionistic, imagistic, realistic in form? in content? in treatment? Is it 'pure' or are there elements of several schools intermingled?

Using the standards of the particular literary school that the work has been found to most closely approximate as an indication of the probable artistic and philosophic perspective of the author, the gestalt critic then searches for verifying details within the work itself.



From the examination of the literary work, the critic will attempt to determine the philosophic and artistic perspectives of the author. The main determinants in thought are these two perspectives; they must therefore be the main determinants in interpretative evaluation. More than any other factors they are indicative of the potential meanings the work in question conveys; more than any other elements they indicate the standards in the light of which the work was created by an author consciously or unconsciously under their influence. They are indicative, also, of the author's sensitivity to particular areas, and of the degree to which his symbolic implications may be carried without exceeding his intention. The degree of evaluation of a work of art may be said to be dependent upon the degree of realization of the author's perspectives.

No full realization of the philosophic and artistic perspectives of an author may be achieved without a recognition of the influence of Zeitgeist upon the intellectual processes of a person. The pattern of dominant forces in a culture so influence the thinking of an artist that they outline the area in which his artistic attention is focused, and prescribe the boundaries of the meanings of his very words.

In determining these two perspectives, the gestalt critic will attempt to show that they are evident in their



antecedent continuum: that they exist in his previous works. Criticism of a work in isolation, or of the first or single work by an author is limited in this respect. Of necessity, the critical valuation of that author must be incomplete. In the words of John Dewey:

In most cases, the discrimination of a critic has to be assisted by a knowledge of the development of an artist, as that is manifested in the succession of his works. Only rarely can an artist be criticized by a single specimen of his activity. The inability is not merely because Homer sometimes nods, but because understanding of the logic of the development of an artist is necessary to discrimination of his intent in any single work. Possession of this understanding broadens and refines the background without which judgement is blind and arbitrary.<sup>1</sup>

A realization of these twin perspectives is an aid in opening a channel of communication between the artist and appreciator, who is, in this case, also the critic. At the risk of seeming ambiguous, it is necessary at this point to remark that when the reader achieves a state in which he may be termed an appreciator, he has already engaged in the critical process. Conversely, gestalt criticism implies a state of participation in the work-of-art process, so that the gestalt critic is also appreciator. Gestalt criticism is thus never completely objective, is never wholly subjective; the gestalt critic is aware of the influences of both types of critical doc-

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<sup>1</sup> Art as Experience, p. 312.





trines upon his own relativist criticism of gestalt.

An artistic perspective is an adjunct to an artist's philosophic perspective and determines the art form he uses for his object of art, since the important, valuable and significant elements of that art form find their justification in his particular philosophy. The art form that expresses most completely and in all its aspects the meaning of a philosophy will be the art form used--deliberately or unconsciously--by an artist in that philosophy. But since an artist is often unaware of his philosophic and artistic perspectives, the choice of a form by an artist is indicative to the critic of the existence of these perspectives and their influence upon the artist. In the field of literature 'form' is to mean novel, sonnet, short story, etc.

The critical attempt is not merely to place an author within a "school" but to use the discovered relationship to indicate the direction of the author's artistic drive, the particular meanings which attach themselves to the symbolism used when that symbolism is derivative from a literary area with its own definitive meanings, and as far as possible, the extent to which the implied meanings should be carried.

Whether the critic likes or dislikes the philosophic perspective of an author is an important consideration.



Since the problem is not one of discovering the values of a work of art in relation to the critic's beliefs, suspension of the critic's beliefs is necessary for a valid evaluation. Any consideration of an opposite view leads to total subjectivism in criticism. The critic can only use the discovered perspectives as an aid in evaluative interpretation, and not as a basis for merit or demerit.

This problem of suspension of belief by the critic has been related to the concept of truth as artistic insight by Bernard C. Heyl in the following manner:

Since this problem deals with the clash between the point of view of the "beliefs" mediated by the work of art and the point of view of the "beliefs" held by the critic of the work of art, the important questions are: can intellectual understanding and imaginative assent be given to artistic contents or meanings which are not shared or accepted as one's own? and, if this is possible, does or should a disbelief in these contents or meanings affect one's appraisal of them--e.g. can an atheist expertly appraise Rembrandt's "Supper at Emmaus"? The diversity of responses to these questions is interesting and illuminating (though art criticism has shown too little concern with this problem), but only their connection with the conception of truth as artistic insight need now be mentioned.

If, as many competent writers contend, the beliefs of the artist, by which I now mean to include all of his conceptual and intuitive convictions--need not be shared by the critic in order that he may appraise a work of art expertly, truth may reasonably be claimed for the artistic insight by those who chose to define "truth," at least partially, in terms of intuition; for in that case the critic's concern will be imaginatively toprehend the work of art. His own convictions will be artistically irrelevant and, by suspending disbelief for the time being, he will judge the truth of the artistic insights on the basis of the artist's standards.



Thus, in judging the sensuousness of Rubens' art, a puritan critic may hold his own beliefs in abeyance, may at least understand the insights which Rubens wished to convey, and may appraise these as truths on the basis of Rubens' experience of life...

.....

But if, as other competent writers hold, the beliefs of the artist must be shared and accepted by the critic in order that he may appraise expertly, the truths expressed as insights in the object cannot be considered artistically pertinent or meaningful; for, in that case, judgement upon the truth of these insights will be passed upon the basis of the critic's standards; and the critic will not be able to appreciate or apprehend the insights sympathetically, unless they by chance coincide with his own truths or beliefs. Thus, the puritan critic will judge Rubens solely on the basis of his own puritan criteria and will find no truth in that artist's sensuously expressed insights.<sup>2</sup>

The necessity of discovering the philosophic perspective of an author (which has been harped on so consistently in this thesis) is important because the selection of material by an artist is based on his philosophic perspective and determines those values he is trying to point up. While realization of an author's perspectives is an aid to interpreting his work, it is not the only aid. The pattern of his behavior also classifies an author: what he does, says, thinks, as expressed in published (or in any form available) letters, essays, lectures, talks, comments, or recorded conversations. This is the biographical approach to

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<sup>2</sup> New Bearings in Esthetics and Art Criticism, pp. 74-77.





\* criticism, which must be considered--along with the sociological, psychological, historical, ecological, intuitive and other approaches--in any consideration of gestalten in criticism.

Since all art is concerned with meaning, however much the values of the meanings differ, the important approach to investigation is semantic. In the non-literary area, the investigation is concerned with an inquiry into the words, phrases and sentences of the work to determine the meaning. With literature, however, the critic is dealing with an art-form, which, like all art forms, conveys its meaning through non-verbal realizations of the meanings implicit in its form, manner of presentation, symbolization, and imagery, as well as the connotational import of the language used.

As in the case of the plastic arts, there is a definite relation between matter and form, form and content, with one additional element contributing to a unified relationship: time. The plastic arts are viewed by the appreciator and the whole is instantly perceived, although the realization of the intricacies of pattern necessitate an action in time. In the temporal arts, the whole can never be perceived until the work has been heard, seen or read in completion, and the unity of the whole is not presented to the appreciator for understanding until an act



of cognition on the part of the appreciator takes place over a considerable length of time. This amount of time varies, dependent upon the physical size of the work and the degree of artistic import it contains.

With the plastic arts an act of analysis from a given whole, followed by an act of synthesis to determine the unity and totality of the patterns which comprise the work is the process of criticism. With the temporal arts, especially literature, the parts are given separately and their relationships are evident only in a temporal sense: that is, the patterns are perceived only as the work progresses. The important thing is that no complete unification of the elements comprising the pattern can take place until the work has been completely perceived over whatever period of time is necessary for this act of apperception. Therefore, no realization of the importance of the several elements, or the intricacies of their relationships--or the relationships themselves--can be completed until the work in question is finally and fully perceived.

A spatial relationship of parts is common to both works of plastic and temporal arts, and is, in the case of the plastic arts, one of the most important factors contributing to the ideational signification of the work, as well as to the emotional connotation. In the case of the temporal arts, the very term temporal gives clue to the



importance of the time-consuming--as well as time binding--element. That a character, situation, event, or meaning can be developed over a period of time, and can be viewed from more than a single observation point is a characteristic only of the temporal arts, most especially literature. For, in the dance, and in music, once the physical phenomena are completed, they cannot be easily re-viewed or re-heard in part and at will so as to ascertain a suspected relationship.<sup>3</sup> More important is the factor, individual to literature, that the speed of performance is keyed individually to the comprehension-time of the reader. Literature also has elements of the dance and of music: imagery and tonality. Alone of all the arts, literature has the intensity of connotational import which is achieved only by language as a process of symbolization.

Gestalt theory in criticism deals with two major areas: the influences at work on the artist while creating,

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<sup>3</sup> This is not to say that a musician cannot analyze a musical score by playing fragments on a piano; or a dancer to execute an entre-chat or tour jete as illustrative of a significant and meaningful episode. However, these acts are performed out of context and out of their original setting. In the case of the music, the theme played by a selected combination of instruments is contributory to the meaning, as the selection of particular instruments contribute to a significance based on tonality. This tonality is lost unless the same number and kind of instruments are used in playing the fragment, such as may be possible if recordings are used.





and the object of art itself, realizing that there is/an interaction between them and that they are inseparable. Whatever consideration of the influences affecting the artist exists only as a means of determining the meaning potential with the object of art. The first area has been discussed at great length. There remains only a consideration of the second area. It is important to keep in mind the principle of gestalt whenever a critical examination of an object of art is taking place, for, too often, the critic becomes lost in a dissection of the elements comprising the object of art and forgets that it is not merely an addition of these elements (or qualities) that is the object of art; it is in the interacting relationship of these qualities operating as an organic unity in the relationship of artist, object of art and appreciator that the object of art is deserving of its claim to artistry. The gestalt conception is thus seen to be limited not to a consideration of the object of art, but to include the work of art totality as well.

An analysis of the object of art by the gestalt critic is for the purpose of discovering relationships between these artificially separated elements (the artificiality of their separation takes place upon their separation from one another in the act of analysis. The discovered relationships will be found to fit a pattern,



and it is in the discovery of this unifying and integrating pattern of wholeness (or patterns, for there are usually more than one) that the totality of the artistic work becomes evident. Thus, there are several critical processes proceeding simultaneously, and it is important that these processes be considered as taking place at the same time. It is a casting and re-casting over the same artistic area, in which the critic may be likened, in a manner of speaking, to a bird-dog searching for spoor: The critic finds an evident symbolism. Its meaning shall be carried how far? What is the perspective of the author, since that reveals the extent of the implication? The perspective is revealed at the same time the symbolism becomes apparent; as the one becomes more apparent the other becomes more evident and they mutually strengthen one another. The whole is a mutually developmental process carried on in an oscillatory pattern that may be called spatial-progression (as opposed to linear progression), and which is dependent upon the sensitivity of the critic to artistic import, and to non-verbal realization of meanings conveyed not only by denotational language, but by image-flow and image pattern.

As the critic senses the growth of this pattern he is a participator in the work of art totality; as he participates his critical insight is sensitized--each reinforces the intensity and depth and richness of the other,



so that out of the process and pattern emerges an understanding of the work of art. This is the critical process which a gestalt theory attempts to aid the critic in achieving. The function of the critic, once having undergone the appreciator process, is to sensitize others to a potential realization of the values conveyed in the process. Only as the practice of this gestalt theory aids in achieving this contribution is there any validity to it. Its final testing must be based on experiential use.





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## ABSTRACT OF THESIS

This thesis has been an attempt to set up a critical frame of reference which uses the theory of gestalt as a unifying and integrative factor in modern literary criticism. Hitherto, examinations of a work of art have been concerned with less than a totality of the work of art as an organic experience. Since the Modern Climate of Opinion considers a work of art as an experiential process, not only the object of art, but the artist and the appreciator are vital and primary interacting elements that make up the totality of a work of art, and in whose interaction may be found the organic wholeness of the process.

Basically, gestalt criticism is criticism that is cognizant of the totality of organic unity and functioning of a work of art, and while concerned with an analysis of that work of art, is concerned to a greater extent with the work of art in relation to its interaction with life. It may be termed an ecological consideration of literature, in one sense, yet the ecology of a literary work is only one of the multiplicity of elements involved in an interpretative evaluation of that work. As all theory of gestalten is a non-summative consideration of organic unity (the sum of the elements of an organism plus X, with X standing for the quality resultant from the interaction of



these elements to produce the unique action of the organism as an individual), so, too, is gestalt criticism.

As in the case of any theory, the broad statements made here are open to critical examination, and to change, if necessary. Whatever validity this theory of gestalt criticism may have is dependent only on the degree to which it better enables the critical function to operate.

John Steinbeck has been taken as a subject for practical criticism using the principles of gestalt criticism. As a result of this inquiry it will be seen that previous critical techniques have failed in adequately performing the function of literary criticism. Gestalt criticism is an attempt to apply a critical basis which allows for a deeper and more penetrating insight and understanding of a work of art.

Works of art are emergent from a particular philosophic perspective; so, too, following the works of art, criteria by which these works of art are evaluated should also emerge from the same philosophy. A work of art is most validly evaluated by critical standards which are emergent out of the same philosophy as that held by the creator of that work of art, or by standards emergent out of a later philosophic perspective which has progressed intellectually and humanly beyond this original philosophy. Thus, while traditional art may be judged by traditional



criteria, it may also be evaluated by critical standards emergent out of the Modern Climate of Opinion.

The converse is not true. Art created by a responsible artist, consciously or unconsciously in the Modern Climate of Opinion, cannot with any validity be criticized (in the full sense of the work) by traditional critical standards. These assumptions have all been dealt with in the body of the thesis.

The function of gestalt criticism is more than just the evaluation of literary material. As literature of any consequence or significance is indicative of the intellectual and human values achieved by contemporary civilization, so literary criticism must have as its function the evaluation of this civilization. Literary criticism is concerned with humanity in its most vital aspect. It attains whatever importance it may have, measured on a scale of human values, when its potentialities as a particular form of communication are realized and put to use. This communicative function is indicative evaluation: a critical examination into a work of art to determine its values and to point out the potential values that lie within the work when experienced by the appreciator. It is non-judgemental criticism. Only when criticism is used as a means of interpreting art in its relationship to life, pointing out the direction of progression of our culture,





which the artist, in his sensitive intellectuality has realized and portrayed in whatever media he uses, that it utilizes to the fullest these potentialities. A concern for this is necessary in every serious, conscientious critic no matter what his personal philosophic perspective may be.

Gestalt theory in criticism deals with two major areas: the influences at work on the artist while creating, and the object of art itself, realizing that there is an interaction between them and that they are inseparable. Whatever consideration of the influences affecting the artist exists only as a means of determining the meaning potential within the object of art. It is in the interacting relationship of all the elements of an object of art operating as an organic unity in the triadic relationship of artist, object of art, and appreciator that the object of art is deserving of its claim to artistry. The gestalt conception is thus seen to be limited not alone to a consideration of the object of art, but to include the work of art totality as well. The work of art totality is that which is an integration of artist, object of art and appreciator.

A major portion of this thesis has been devoted to a practical examination of a work by a modern author. In this examination all of the principles outlined in the theory of gestalt criticism set forth here are used.

1. The first part of the paper is devoted to the study of the

properties of the function  $f(x)$  defined by the equation

$f(x) = \int_0^x f(t) dt$  for  $x \in [0, 1]$ .

It is shown that  $f(x)$  is a continuous function on the interval

$[0, 1]$  and that  $f(0) = 0$ .

2. In the second part of the paper, we consider the problem of

finding the maximum value of the function  $f(x)$  on the interval

$[0, 1]$ .

It is shown that the maximum value of  $f(x)$  is attained at

$x = 1$  and is equal to  $f(1)$ .

3. In the third part of the paper, we consider the problem of

finding the minimum value of the function  $f(x)$  on the interval

$[0, 1]$ .

It is shown that the minimum value of  $f(x)$  is attained at

$x = 0$  and is equal to  $f(0) = 0$ .

4. In the fourth part of the paper, we consider the problem of

finding the maximum value of the function  $f(x)$  on the interval

$[0, 1]$ .

It is shown that the maximum value of  $f(x)$  is attained at

$x = 1$  and is equal to  $f(1)$ .

5. In the fifth part of the paper, we consider the problem of

finding the minimum value of the function  $f(x)$  on the interval

$[0, 1]$ .

It is shown that the minimum value of  $f(x)$  is attained at

$x = 0$  and is equal to  $f(0) = 0$ .

6. In the sixth part of the paper, we consider the problem of

finding the maximum value of the function  $f(x)$  on the interval

$[0, 1]$ .

It is shown that the maximum value of  $f(x)$  is attained at

The practise is both illustrative of the methods of a gestalt critic and indicative of the added values that may be derived from a work of art.











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